MARVEL
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THE OFFICIAL MARVEL® NEWSMAGAZINE!
MARVEL AGE®
78
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STILL 50¢
SPECIAL 5-PAGE PREVIEW OF
QUASAR
X-CLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH MUTANT EDITOR BOB HARRAS!
RYAN '88
PLUS INSIDE INFO ON: THE DOCTOR DOOM AND DOCTOR STRANGE GRAPHIC NOVEL! AND SHADOW-MASTERS!

STAN LEE PRESENTS
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Before we get to anything else, it's time for another–

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

...Last issue, we said that MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE was regretfully raising its price to a buck–so what happened? We're still 50¢! Honest, gang, no one's more confused than we are! But it seems that somehow we found a way to keep from raising our price to a full dollar–instead we're going up to 75¢. We're not thrilled about any price increase, but the lower the increase, the better.

Still, that doesn't explain why this issue is still only 50¢. Well, would you believe things happened so fast, that our rapturous retailers weren't informed of our new price in time to place their orders, so we decided to hold off for one more issue. Consider it a lucky break for all concerned.

In the meantime, we're extending our subscription offer–where you can still order MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE for only 50¢ an issue–for another month! That gives you until June 20, 1989 to take advantage of this special deal.

☐ **Yes! I want the next 12 issues of MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE for only $6.00!**

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KEY MARVEL AGE 78

Sheesh! Who said editing Marvel's official newsmagazine was easy?!
–Jim Salicrup

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MARVEL AGE™ Vol. 1, No. 78, September, 1989. (ISSN #8750-4367) Published by MARVEL COMICS, James E. Galton, President; Stan Lee, Publisher; Michael Hobson, Group Vice President. OFFICE OF PUBLICATION: 387 PARK AVENUE SOUTH, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10016. **SECOND CLASS POSTAGE PAID AT NEW YORK, N.Y. AND AT ADDITIONAL MAILING OFFICES.** Published monthly. Copyright © 1989 by Marvel Entertainment Group, Inc. All rights reserved. Price 50¢ per copy in the U.S. and Canada. Subscription rate $6.00 for 12 issues. Canada and foreign, $8.00. Printed in the U.S.A. This periodical may not be sold except by authorized dealers and is sold subject to the conditions that it shall not be sold or distributed with any part of its cover or markings removed, nor in a mutilated condition. MARVEL AGE (including all MARVEL titles and prominent MARVEL characters featured in the issue and the distinctive likenesses thereof), are trademarks of MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT GROUP, INC. **POSTMASTER: SEND ADDRESS CHANGES TO MARVEL AGE, 387 PARK AVENUE SOUTH, 9TH FLOOR, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10016.**

MARVEL® COMING ATTRACTIONS

Here's a complete checklist of what's happening in all the Marvel, Epic, New Universe, and Marvel U.K. titles shipping in June.

Titles Shipping June 6
On Sale June 27

☐ **THE PUNISHER MAGAZINE** #1—Talk about a debut with a bang—this one is it! It's the adaptation of the action-packed PUNISHER movie starring **Dolph Lundgren**! Written by **Carl Potts** and drawn by **Brent Anderson**. A Marvel black and white magazine. 64 pages. $2.50.

☐ **DAREDEVIL** #271 — What happens when genetic manipulation creates the ultimate animal horror? **Daredevil** finds out when he battles the nightmarish creation known only as **Number 9**! "Genetrix" is written by **Ann Nocenti**, penciled by **John Romita Jr.**, and inked by **Al Williamson**. $1.00.

☐ **AVENGERS WEST COAST** #49—The **Scarlet Witch**'s shocking new identity! The full truth that links the **Vision** and the original **Human Torch** is revealed at last! Plus more on **Tigra**'s frightening transformation and her mysterious relationship with the **USAgent**! Written and penciled by **John Byrne** and inked by **Mike Machlan**. $1.00.

☐ **THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN** #321—Has **Paladin** gone crazy? He's hired himself out to **Carlton Drake** and his **Life Foundation! Spidey** uncovers the frightening truth behind **Carlton Drake**'s latest plot in one of the most suspense-filled **Spidey** sagas yet! "The Assassin Nation Plot" is written by **David Michelinie** and drawn by **Todd McFarlane**. Biweekly. $1.00.

☐ **THE PUNISHER MOVIE SPECIAL** #1—The dynamite movie starring **Dolph Lundgren** is now a high-quality, full-color Marvel Graphic Album! Written by **Carl Potts** and drawn by **Brent Anderson**. 64 pages. $4.95.

☐ **G.I. JOE SPECIAL MISSIONS** #26—The Soviet Union's version of **G.I. Joe**—the **Oktober Guard**—is back! And once you see the mission they're on, you'll know what we mean when we say it might just be their final operation! Written by **Larry Hama** and penciled by **Herb Trimpe**. $1.00.

☐ **THE UNCANNY X-MEN** #249—The biweekly action begins! **Havok** makes a final, desperate attempt to save the woman he's loved above all others, **Polaris**! But will his actions reduce the already-decimated ranks of the **X-Men**? "Sisters" is written by **Chris Claremont**, penciled by **Marc Silvestri**, and inked by **Dan Green**. $1.00.

☐ **SAGA OF WOLVERINE Limited Series** #2—**Wolverine** has his first adventure in Japan and meets the lovely **Mariko**, fights to sever his last link to **Alpha Flight**, faces the awesome threat of **Dark Phoenix**, and is implanted with a parasitic egg by the **Brood**! Face it, this chapter of **Wolverin**'s epic biography is the big one! Written by **Peter Sanderson**. 48 pages. A Marvel Graphic Album. $3.95.

A **Limited Series** is a title which will only run for a specific number of issues.

A **Graphic Novel** is an 8 ½" x 11" paperback edition.

A **Trade Paperback** is a 7" x 10" paperback edition.

A **Graphic Album** is a 6⅝" x 10" high quality, square-bound edition.

A **Direct Sales** title is available only at selected outlets.

Shipping Date refers to when the comics leave the printer.

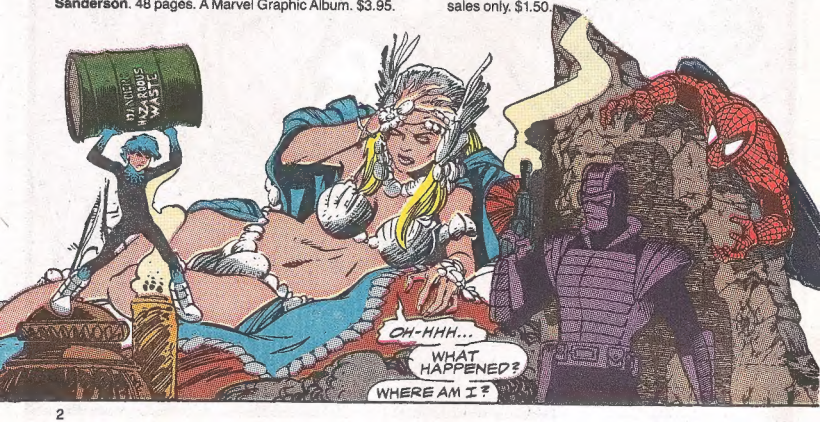
☐ **THE SENSATIONAL SHE-HULK** #6—**Razorback**'s hijacked a space shuttle. And a hitchhiking **She-Hulk** is going to make him bring it back—or is she? Written and penciled by **John Byrne** and inked by **Bob Wiacek**. 32 pages. Mando Offset paper. $1.50.

☐ **AVENGERS ANNUAL** #18—Chapter VIII of the crossover "Atlantis Attacks" epic! **Orka** and the Atlantean hordes attack the Shoreham Nuclear Power plant! If they succeed, New York City will be destroyed in a nuclear holocaust! Written by **Mike Higgins**, penciled by **Ron Wilson**, and inked by **Mike Gustovich**. Cover by **John Byrne**. 64 pages. $2.00.

☐ **G.I. JOE EUROPEAN MISSIONS** #13—**Destro** is behind bars. And **Cobra**'s vowed to destroy London unless he's set free! It's a hostage horror only **G.I. Joe** has the guts to solve! Written by **Steve Alan** and drawn by **Robin Smith**. A Marvel U.K. comic. Mando Offset paper. Direct sales only. $1.75.

Titles Shipping June 13 On Sale July 4

☐ **POWER PACK** #49—Can **Power Pack** save the dolphins from the ever-expanding toxic waste—or will they succumb to the malevolent poisons as well? **Franklin Richards** has seen their future, and it's a nightmare! "Waste Not Want Not" is written and penciled by **Jon Bogdanove** and inked by **Hilary Barta**. 32 pages. Mando Offset paper. Direct sales only. $1.50.



☐ **WEB OF SPIDER-MAN** #55—The gang war for control of the **Kingpin**'s underworld empire enters its final—and most brutal—chapter! It's the **Kingpin** and the **Arranger** against the **Chameleon, Hammerhead**, and the **Lobo Brothers**. "Siege" is written by **Gerry Conway**, penciled by **Alex Saviuk**, and inked by **Keith Williams**. $1.00.

☐ **ALF** #20—The **Tanners** have a new baby—and **ALF** has volunteered to be the baby-sitter! Will there be anything left of the house when the **Tanners** come home? "The New Baby" is written by **Michael Gallagher**, penciled by **Dave Manak**, and inked by **Marie Severin**. $1.00.

☐ **GROO THE WANDERER** #56—The **Minstrel** must be hard up for new material. Either that or he took a wrong turn and got onto the road to disaster. Whatever the reason, the **Minstrel's** side-by-side with **Groo**. And if ever there's a sui-side (ouch!) that is it. Well, before the puns get any worse, we'll quickly tell you that the story is written and drawn by **Sergio Aragonés** and huzzahad by **Mark Evanier**. An Epic comic. $1.00.

☐ **HEATHCLIFF** #38—Heathcliff visits New York City, promptly gets lost in the subway, and before his misadventure is over, dang near brings all business in the Big Apple to a cat-astrophic halt! "Bright Lights, Small Kitty" is written by **Laura Hitchcock**, penciled by **Warren Kremer**, and inked by **Ruth Leon**. $1.00.

☐ **NTH MAN** #3—Col. Novikova and her Soviet military task force is hot on the trail of **Nth Man** and his friends. But the Russians are the last thing on **Nth Man**'s mind—because **Alfie O'Meagan**, the man who started World War III, has found him first! "Retaliation" is written by **Larry Hama**, penciled by **Ron Wagner**, and inked by **Fred Fredericks**. $1.00.

☐ **THE NEW MUTANTS** #80—Hela commands that the **New Mutants** must die. And their executioner will be her latest vassal—**Mirage**! Written by **Louise Simonson**, penciled by **Bret Blevins**, and inked by **Al Williamson**. $1.00.

☐ **THE PUNISHER WAR JOURNAL** #9—The **Black Widow** and the **Shadowmasters** help the **Punisher** track down and destroy a menace more savage than **Wolverine**, more brutal than the **Hulk**, and more cunning than the **Kingpin**! Written by **Carl Potts** and drawn by **Jim Lee**. 32 pages. Mando Offset paper. $1.50.

☐ **ST. GEORGE** #8—The usual creative team takes a break this issue and guest-writer **Dwayne McDuffie** and artist **Jim Lee** step in to tell the story behind **Kara Janisery**, the previous knight of **St. George**, who was killed by **Doctor Zero** back in DOCTOR ZERO #1! Guest-starring the **Doc** himself! An Epic comic. 32 pages. Mando Offset paper. Direct sales only. $1.50.

☐ **THE NEW MUTANTS ANNUAL** #5—Chapter IX in the "Atlantis Attacks" crossover saga!

Attuma's finally got the power to do what he's always desired—annihilate Atlantis! How can the **New Mutants** stop him? Guest-starring **Namorita**! Written by **Louise Simonson** and penciled by **Rob Liefeld**. Plus: **Boom Boom** goes on the Dating Game TV show! Written by **Jon** and **Judy Bogdanove** and drawn by **Jon Bogdanove**. 64 pages. $2.00.

☐ **ALPHA FLIGHT** #75—Special giant-sized anniversary issue! An embattled **Alpha Flight** desperately attempts to unravel the mystery of why they are on an Earth tyrannically ruled by super heroes. But complicating their search, and their chances of survival, is the appearance of a super hero they thought was their friend . . . **Puck**! Written by **James D. Hudnall**, penciled by **John Calimee**, and inked by **Mike Manley**. 48 pages. Mando Offset paper. Direct sales only. $1.95.

☐ **SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN** #164—**Conan** faces the most horrifying peril in the Hyborian Age in "The Slithering God." Written by **Chuck Dixon** and drawn by **Ernie Chan**. A Marvel black and white magazine. 64 pages. $2.25.

☐ **AVENGERS SPOTLIGHT** #23—You knew it as SOLO AVENGERS, now it's AVENGERS SPOTLIGHT!

Talk about your odds-on favorite to lose, **Hawkeye** finds himself up against **Trickshot, Mad-Dog, Bobcat, Bombshell, the Brothers Grimm**—in fact, everyone he's fought ever since SOLO AVENGERS #1! Written by **Howard Mackie**, penciled by **Al Milgrom**, and inked by **Don Heck**.

The Vision crashes the Tonight Show, and late-night television may never survive the experience! Guest-starring **Johnny Carson, Ed McMahon, William Shatner, Pee-Wee Herman**, and **Charo**. Written by **John Byrne**, penciled by **Kieron Dwyer**, and inked by **Karl Kesel**. $1.00.

Titles Shipping June 20
On Sale July 11

☐ **QUASAR** #1—He's one of Marvel's youngest super heroes and the heir to one of the greatest heroic legacies. He's **Quasar**! And in this astonishing origin issue, discover how a patriotic **S.H.I.E.L.D.** agent came to wield one of the most powerful energy devices in the universe! "The Price of Power" is written by **Mark Gruenwald**, penciled by **Paul Ryan**, and inked by **Danny Bulanadi**. $1.00.

☐ **WOLVERINE** #13—"Gehenna Stone" Part III—**Ba'al** is free! And the first victims of his wrath are **Wolverine** and **Jessica Drew**! Written by **Peter David** and penciled by **John Buscema**. 32 pages. Mando Offset paper. Biweekly. $1.50.

☐ **MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS** #30—The biweekly anthology action has never been better!

HAVOK Part VII: Even with **Wolverine** at his side, can **Havok** save the woman he's come to love from the **Cult of the Living Pharaoh**? Written by **Howard Mackie**, penciled by **Rich Buckler**, and inked by **Joe Rubinstein**.

BLACK PANTHER Part XVIII: The wounded **Black Panther** fights to save the only man who can help him find his mother! Written by **Don McGregor**, penciled by **Gene Colan**, and inked by **Tom Palmer**.

COLDBLOOD Part V: The shocking origin of **Coldblood**! Written by **Doug Moench** and drawn by **Paul Gulacy**.

And complete in this issue: **Leir** goes on a rampage! And you'll discover just how devastating the wrath of a god can be! Written by **Sue Flaxman** and drawn by **Tom Morgan**. 32 pages. $1.25.

☐ **MARVEL UNIVERSE UPDATE Limited Series** #4—From **Killraven** to the **Punisher**, everything you wanted to know about your favorite heroes and villains, their histories and weapons—and more! Written by **Peter Sanderson**, penciled by **Mark Silvestri, Jon Bogdanove, Bret Blevins, Paul Neary**, and more. Inked by **Joe Rubinstein**. 48 pages. Direct sales only. $1.50.

☐ **FANTASTIC FOUR Trade Paperback**—Specially edited and re-presented from FANTASTIC FOUR #244-262, the awesome Trial of **Galactus** saga! It's a tale that spans the cosmos, has a galaxy of guest-stars, and one of the most cosmic climaxes in the Marvel Universe! It's written and drawn by **John Byrne** and it also features a new introduction and cover by **John**, too! 176 pages. Direct sales only. $12.95.

☐ **CAPTAIN AMERICA** #360—Two fast-paced serials in one title!

BLOODSTONE HUNT Part III: The globe-spanning hunt for the legendary **Bloodstone** fragments finds **Cap** and **Zemo** on a South Sea island. But instead of the **Bloodstone** fragment, they might find death, for joining the hunt is a sinister fellow by the name of **Crossbones**! Written by **Mark Gruenwald**, penciled by **Kieron Dwyer**, and inked by **Al Milgrom**.

USAGENT VS. SCOURGE Part III: **Scourge** is on the **Power Broker**'s estate! Can the **USAgent** intercept him before he kills the **Power Broker**? Written by **Mark Gruenwald**, penciled by **Mark Bright**, and inked by **Al Milgrom**. Biweekly. $1.00.

☐ **THE AVENGERS** #308 — To save **Gilgamesh, the Avengers** must get him to his home in Olympia. Trouble is, Olympia has vanished! Written by **John Byrne**, penciled by **Paul Ryan**, and inked by **Tom Palmer**. $1.00.

☐ **CONAN THE BARBARIAN** #223—The offer of a king's ransom in gold made **Conan** a willing pawn in a religious cult feud. It will take all of **Conan**'s wits and strength to escape the cult's clutches once his usefulness has ended! Written by **Michael Fleisher**, penciled by **Gary Kwapisz**, and inked by **Alfredo Alcala**. $1.00.

☐ **G.I. JOE** #91—If you love ninja action, this story is for you! It's the final showdown between the **Blind Master** and **Zartan! Stormshadow** confronts all of **Cobra's Red Ninjas**! And wait'll you see the fight that **Scarlett** and **Snake Eyes** get themselves into! "No Simple Solutions" is written by **Larry Hama**, penciled by **Tony Salmons**, and inked by **Randy Emberlin**. $1.00.

☐ **THE PUNISHER** #24—The Punisher finds the team of ninja assassins is more than even he can handle! But will he accept the **Shadowmasters** as his allies? "Land of the Eternal Sun" is written by **Mike Baron**, penciled by **Erik Larsen**, and inked by **Scott Williams**. $1.00.

☐ **MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE** #79—A special report and 5-page preview of the NICK FURY/WOLVERINE hardcover graphic novel, plus reports on the NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET magazine, **Moebius**'s Western graphic novel CHIHUAHUA PEARL, and all our regular features—**Stan**'s Soapbox, **Mark**'s Remarks, **Hembeck**'s Page, and more! $1.00.

☐ **EXCALIBUR** #13—Talk about a bizarre predicament, **Kitty**'s got one! The Prince of Wales has just asked her to marry him—and there's no way she can refuse! You'll see how even the impossible can become frighteningly true in "Royal Wedding!" Written by **Chris Claremont**, penciled by **Alan Davis**, and inked by **Paul Neary**. 32 pages. Mando Offset paper. $1.50.

☐ **THE INCREDIBLE HULK** #360—Hey, just what *did* happen to **Betty Talbot Banner** and her baby? The answer is revealed at last! And it's one that could chill even the **Hulk**'s savage blood! "Night Moves" is guest-written by **Bob Harras**, penciled by **Dan Reed**, and inked by **Marie Severin**. $1.00.

☐ **MARVEL TALES** #228—Re-presenting from PETER PARKER THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #17, the awesome last stand of the **Champions! Spider-Man** teams up with **X-Factor's Angel** to battle the bone-breaking **Rampage!** But wait'll you see what happens when they discover **Rampage's** shocking secret identity! Written by **Bill Mantlo**, penciled by **Sal Buscema**, and inked by **David Hunt**. New cover by **Todd McFarlane**. $1.00.

THE SAGA OF THE SUB-MARINER Limited Series #12—Talk about your blockbuster finales—this one's dynamite!

For the first time ever, discover **Subby**'s version of the most infamous chapter of his life, his team-up with **Doctor Doom**! Thrill anew to his epic battles as an **Avenger**, and witness the crushing tragedy of the death of his beloved, **Marrina**! Written by **Roy** and **Dann Thomas**, penciled by **Rich Buckler**, and inked by **Bob McLeod**. 32 pages. Mando Offset paper. Direct sales only. $1.50.

☐ **DEATH'S HEAD** #8—**Dogblotter** has long sought revenge on the **Doctor**, that's why he's created his own time machine and ordered **Death's Head** to go back in time and kill the famous time-traveler! But the results of the assassination are not what anyone expects! Written by **Steve Parkhouse**, penciled by **Art Wetherell**, and inked by **Steve Parkhouse**. A Marvel U.K. comic. Mando Offset paper. Direct sales only. $1.75.

☐ **X-FACTOR ANNUAL** #4—Chapter X in the "Atlantis Attacks" crossover epic! **Set** gets **Phoenix** as his consort! Or does he? Written and penciled by **John Byrne** and inked by **Walt Simonson**. 64 pages. $2.00.

☐ **SILVER SURFER** #28—**Cap'n Reptyle** joins the **Skrulls! Shalla Bal** is kidnaped by the **Kree**! And the **Silver Surfer** can't stop the war from happening! "Neanderthals" is written by **Steve Englehart**, penciled by **Ron Lim**, and inked by **Tom Christopher**. $1.00.

☐ **THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN** #322—The **Life Foundation** is involved in a conspiracy that threatens world peace. To stop its leader, **Carlton Drake, Spider-Man** forms an uneasy alliance with **Silver Sable** and the man she hired to stop the **Life Foundation—Paladin**! Written by **David Michelinie** and drawn by **Todd McFarlane**. Biweekly. $1.00.

☐ **THE UNCANNY X-MEN** #250 — The **X-Men** vs. the **Savage Land Mutates**—and the **X-Men** lose! Plus: what is the terrible secret that haunts **Lorna Dane**? "The Dane Curse" is written by **Chris Claremont**, penciled by **Mark Silvestri**, and inked by **Dan Green**. Biweekly. $1.00.

☐ **WHAT IF . . .?** #4—You've seen what kind of threat the alien **Spidey**-costume has become as the super-villain **Venom**. Now, in this gripping exploration of alternate possibilities, discover what would have happened if the alien costume had totally possessed **Peter Parker**! Guest-starring the **Fantastic Four, the Avengers,** and the **Hulk**! Written by **Danny Fingeroth**, penciled by **Mark Bagley**, and inked by **Keith Williams**. 32 pages.

☐ **NICK FURY AGENT OF S.H.I.E.L.D.** #2—The only way **Nick Fury** can survive assassination by the **Death's Head Commandos** is if he gets some allies fast. But time has already run out! "A Web Has Many Strands" is written by **Bob Harras**, penciled by **Keith Pollard**, and inked by **Kim DeMulder**. 32 pages. Mando Offset paper. Direct sales only. $1.50.

☐ **MARVEL FANFARE** #46—The **Fantastic Four** versus the **Mad Thinker's Awesome Android**—and you'll discover exactly why it is called the **Awesome Android**! This cover-to-cover battle spectacular is written by **Mike Barr**, penciled by **Louis Williams**, and inked by **Bob Wiacek**. 32 pages. Hudson paper. Direct sales only. $1.95.

☐ **SHADOWMASTERS Limited Series** #1—In the aftermath of World War II, from the ruins of devastated Japan comes a new team of ninjas. But are they renegades seeking revenge? Or are the **Shadowmasters** a new breed of heroes? The answer lies in the awesome tale of their origin! Written by **Carl Potts**, penciled by **Dan Lawless**, and inked by **Russ Heath**. A Marvel Graphic Album. 48 pages. $3.95.

Titles Shipping June 27
On Sale July 18

☐ **FANTASTIC FOUR** #331—Defeating the **Frightful Four** is hard enough, but how is the **FF** going to stop the rogue **Watcher's** evil creation, a duplicate **Fantastic Four**? Written by **J. Harkness**, penciled by **Rich Buckler**, and inked by **Romeo Tanghal**. $1.00.

☐ **IRON MAN** #247 — **Iron Man** tries to free **Madame Masque** from **Hydra**, and runs headlong into **Hydra's** special hired hand—the **Hulk**! Co-plotted and scripted by **David Michelinie** and co-plotted and drawn by **Bob Layton**. $1.00.

☐ **THOR** #408—The fate of the **High Evolutionary** revealed! **Thor** gets a new mortal identity! And just when you think **Thor's** going to have it easy, the super-powered **Mongoose** bushwhacks him! Written by **Tom DeFalco**, penciled by **Ron Frenz**, and inked by **Joe Sinnott**. Plus, in Tales of Asgard: the conclusion of the brutal **Thor** versus Uroc battle! Written by **Tom DeFalco**, penciled by **Mike Mignola** and inked by **Bob Wiacek**. $1.00.

☐ **THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN** #155—**Robbie Robertson** betrays **Spider-Man** to **Tombstone**! As if that weren't trouble enough, wait'll you see the plans that the **Puma** has for the Daily Bugle—and they don't include **J. Jonah Jameson**! Written by **Gerry Conway** and drawn by **Sal Buscema**. $1.00.

☐ **THE TRANSFORMERS** #57—**Optimus Prime** is locked in a fight to the death with **Scorponok**! But who is the traitor who stands ready to slay the victor and seize control of the **Transformers**? Written by **Simon Furman** and penciled by **Jose Delbo**. $1.00.

☐ **WOLVERINE** #14—In Part IV of the six-part "Gehenna Stone" story, **Ba'al** and his hordes must kill the only two mortals who can stop **Ba'al's** conquest of humanity, **Wolverine** and **Jessica Drew**! Written by **Peter David** and penciled by **John Buscema**. 32 pages. Mando Offset paper. $1.50.

☐ **GROO CHRONICLES Limited Series** #4—Re-presenting from the 6th issue of the original GROO series and GROO SPECIAL #1, the **Sage's** wild adventures as a (most reluctant) companion of **Groo**, and much more! Written and drawn by **Sergio Aragonés**, burnished by **Mark Evanier**, and re-colored by **Tom Luth**. An Epic Graphic Album. 48 pages. Direct sales only. $3.95.

☐ **X-FACTOR** #45—Once the **Beast** and **Iceman** were the best of friends. Now only one will survive the blood feud that has made them bitter enemies! Written by **Louise Simonson**, penciled by **Paul Smith**, and inked by **Al Milgrom**. $1.00.

☐ **MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS** #31—One serial reaches an astonishing conclusion, and an exciting new serial debuts in Marvel's premier biweekly anthology series!

HAVOK Part VIII: The final chapter! Has **Havok** saved the woman he loved? Or has he condemned her soul to an eternity of unimaginable horror? Written by **Howard Mackie**, penciled by **Rich Buckler**, and inked by **Joe Rubinstein**.

BLACK PANTHER Part XIX: Has the **Black Panther** lost the last chance left to discover the whereabouts of his mother? Written by **Don McGregor**, penciled by **Gene Colan**, and inked by **Tom Palmer**.

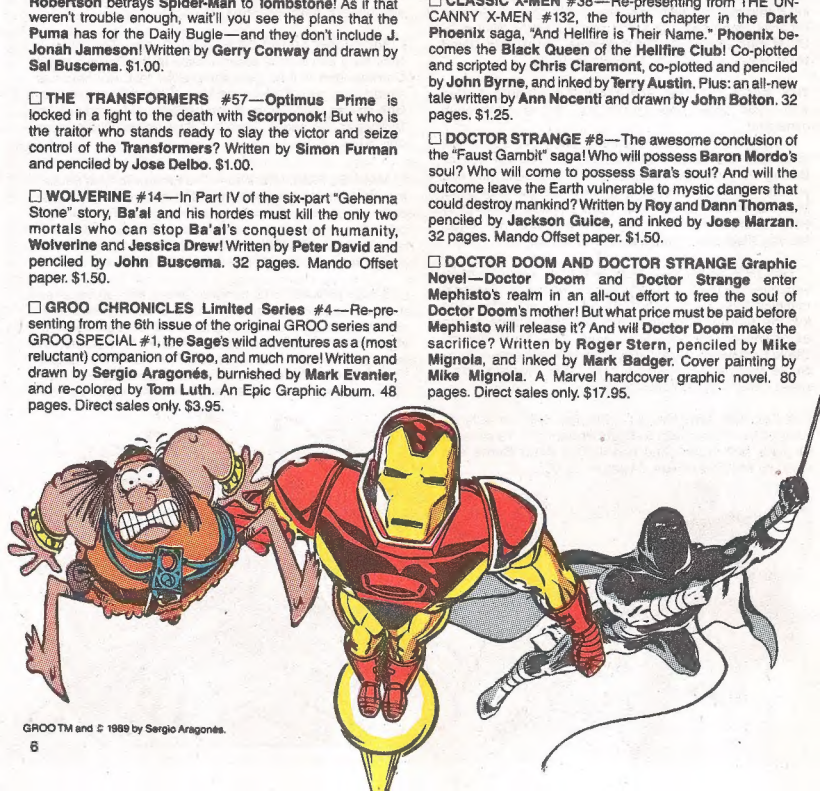
COLDBLOOD Part VI: The conclusion of the origin of **Coldblood**! Written by **Doug Moench** and drawn by **Paul Gulacy**.

EXCALIBUR Part I: Cartoons are supposed to make you laugh. But **Excalibur** discovers that when cartoon characters come to life, they turn into real killers! Written by **Mike Higgins**, penciled by **Erik Larsen**, and inked by **Al Gordon**. 32 pages. $1.25.

☐ **CLASSIC X-MEN** #38—Re-presenting from THE UNCANNY X-MEN #132, the fourth chapter in the **Dark Phoenix** saga, "And Hellfire is Their Name." **Phoenix** becomes the **Black Queen** of the **Hellfire Club**! Co-plotted and scripted by **Chris Claremont**, co-plotted and penciled by **John Byrne**, and inked by **Terry Austin**. Plus: an all-new tale written by **Ann Nocenti** and drawn by **John Bolton**. 32 pages. $1.25.

☐ **DOCTOR STRANGE** #8—The awesome conclusion of the "Faust Gambit" saga! Who will possess **Baron Mordo's** soul? Who will come to possess **Sara's** soul? And will the outcome leave the Earth vulnerable to mystic dangers that could destroy mankind? Written by **Roy** and **Dann Thomas**, penciled by **Jackson Guice**, and inked by **Jose Marzan**. 32 pages. Mando Offset paper. $1.50.

☐ **DOCTOR DOOM AND DOCTOR STRANGE Graphic Novel—Doctor Doom** and **Doctor Strange** enter **Mephisto's** realm in an all-out effort to free the soul of **Doctor Doom's** mother! But what price must be paid before **Mephisto** will release it? And will **Doctor Doom** make the sacrifice? Written by **Roger Stern**, penciled by **Mike Mignola**, and inked by **Mark Badger**. Cover painting by **Mike Mignola**. A Marvel hardcover graphic novel. 80 pages. Direct sales only. $17.95.



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SUPER-VILLAIN CHECKLIST

Arranger—WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #55
Attuma—AVENGERS ANNUAL #18, NEW MUTANTS ANNUAL #9, X-FACTOR ANNUAL #4, WEB OF SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL #5
Ba'al—WOLVERINE #13 and 14
Black Cat—MOON KNIGHT #5
Bombshell—AVENGERS SPOTLIGHT #23
Brothers Grimm—AVENGERS SPOTLIGHT #23
Chameleon—WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #55, SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #155
Crossbones—CAPTAIN AMERICA #360
Cult of the Living Pharoah—MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS #30 and 31
Death's Head Commandos—NICK FURY AGENT OF S.H.I.E.L.D. #2
Doctor Doom—SAGA OF THE SUB-MARINER #12, DOCTOR DOOM AND DOCTOR STRANGE Graphic Novel
Drake, Carlton—AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #321 and 322
Frightful Four—FANTASTIC FOUR #331
Ghaur—AVENGERS ANNUAL #18, NEW MUTANTS ANNUAL #9, X-FACTOR ANNUAL #4, WEB OF SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL #5
Hammerhead—WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #55
Hela—NEW MUTANTS #80
Hellfire Club—CLASSIC X-MEN #38
Hydra—IRON MAN #247
Kingpin—WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #55
Kree—SILVER SURFER #28
Life Foundation—AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #321 and 322
Lyra—AVENGERS ANNUAL #18, NEW MUTANTS ANNUAL #9, X-FACTOR ANNUAL #4, WEB OF SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL #5
Lobo Brothers—WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #55
Mad-Dog—AVENGERS SPOTLIGHT #23
Mad Thinker's Android—MARVEL FANFARE #46
Mephisto—DOCTOR DOOM AND DOCTOR STRANGE Graphic Novel
Mongoose—THOR #408
Number 9—DAREDEVIL #271
Orca—AVENGERS ANNUAL #18
Rampage—MARVEL TALES #228
Razorback—SENSATIONAL SHE-HULK #6
Red Skull—CAPTAIN AMERICA #360
Savage Land Mutates—UNCANNY X-MEN #250
Scourge—CAPTAIN AMERICA #360
Skrulls—SILVER SURFER #28
Tombstone—SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #155
Trickshot—AVENGERS SPOTLIGHT #23
Uroc—THOR #408
Zemo—CAPTAIN AMERICA #360

☐ **ALIEN LEGION #12—Grimrod** gets overzealous in his teaching of dirty fighting to students. And now they plan to use what they've learned to teach him a lesson! Plus: **Tamara** is pregnant! Who's responsible? The answer will shock you! Written by **Chuck Dixon**, penciled by **Larry Stroman**, and inked by **Mark Farmer**. An Epic comic. 32 pages. Mando Offset paper. Direct sales only. $1.50.

☐ **CLOAK AND DAGGER #7—If Cloak** didn't die then what really happened to him? The stunning fate is revealed in "Tyrone"! Written by **Terry Austin** and drawn by **Mike Vosburg**. 32 pages. Mando Offset paper. Direct sales only. $1.50.

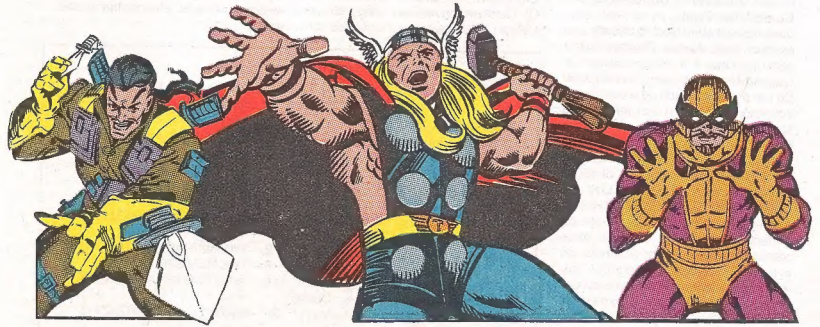
☐ **MOON KNIGHT #5**—The tragic secret of **Midnight** is revealed! Who is the **Black Cat**'s new prey? And how can **Moon Knight** overcome the latest danger that threatens to destroy him? Written by **Chuck Dixon**, penciled by **Sal Velluto**, and inked by **Mark Farmer**. 32 pages. Mando Offset paper. Direct sales only. $1.50.

☐ **THE 'NAM #35**—It's Christmas in Vietnam and **Bob Hope** is once again hosting a special USO show. But racial tensions in the Army ranks threaten to destroy what little holiday spirit is left! Plus a special glimpse into the life of the soldier whose tour of duty started in THE 'NAM #1, **Ed Marks**! Written by **Doug Murray**, penciled by **Wayne Vansant**, and inked by **Geof Isherwood**. 32 pages. Mando Offset paper. Direct sales only. $1.50.

☐ **WEB OF SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL #5**—Chapter XI in the "Atlantis Attacks" crossover saga! And it's a blockbuster! **Attuma** leads the Atlantean legions in an all-out attack on New York City! How can **Spider-Man** and the **Fantastic Four** stop them? Written by **Gerry Conway** and penciled by **Javier Saltares**. Plus solo stories starring **Silver Sable** and **Captain Universe**! 64 pages. $2.00.

☐ **CONAN SAGA #29**—Re-presenting from SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #17, part 2 of the epic adaptation of "People of the Black Circle." "On To Yimsha" is written by **Roy Thomas**, penciled by **John Buscema**, and inked by **Alfredo Alcala**. Plus: from SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #45, the suspense-filled tale, "Master of Shadows" written by **Christy Marx**, penciled by **John Buscema**, and inked by **Tony DeZuniga**. A Marvel black and white magazine. 64 pages. For Mature Readers. $2.25.

☐ **AKIRA #13—Lady Miyako**'s ninja-like mutant helper, **Sakaki**, succeeds in wresting the super-paranormal child, **Akira**, from **Kaneda** and his guerrilla friends, **Kay** and **Chiyoko**. But, despite rioting in streets of Neo-Tokyo, the **Colonel**'s government forces are closing in on both groups and rebel leader **Nezu** plots to betray everyone and gain control of **Akira**'s powers for himself! "Desperation" is written and drawn by **Katsuhiro Otomo**, English adaptation by **Jo Duffy**, with computer coloring by **Steve Oliff**. An Epic Graphic Album. 64 pages. Direct sales only. For Mature Readers. $3.50.



NEWSWATCH

PINT-SIZED POINTS PERTAINING TO PRICES, PROJECTS, AND MORE PERSONAL PROPOSALS.

ITEM: Remember how we told you a month or two ago that inflation was forcing us to raise the price on all our 75¢ comics to $1.00, including MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE? Well, we've got some good news and some bad news. The bad news is that, much as we hate to do it, we really are raising our comics prices to $1.00. But the good news is that we've managed to hold off the demon of inflation as far as MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE itself is concerned; as of issue #79, we're only raising our price to 75¢—not $1.00! And just think: If you save all of those leftover quarters, you'll be a millionaire in only 333,333 years.

Seriously, though, we're sorry we've got to raise our price at all. But we'll continue to do our best to give you the most value we can for your hard-earned six bits! And that'll include some special new features, so stay with us!

ITEM: She's beautiful, she's bright (in more ways than one), and she's on sale now! Any day now, our very first 48-page CAPTAIN MARVEL SPECIAL, written by **Dwayne McDuffie**, penciled by **Mark Bright**, and inked by **Frank Bolle** and **Stan Drake**, will be hitting the stands, and you won't want to miss it.

Why not, you ask? Well, not only does it feature the world's "lightest" **Avenger** singlehandedly battling the likes of **Moonstone, PowderKeg**, and **Guardsman-Prime**, and not only does it guest star **Reed Richards** and ex-**Iron Man, James Rhodes**, but it also introduces a major change in Captain Marvel's powers and abilities! So run out and snatch up a copy while you can. They won't last long at the speed of light!

ITEM: Speaking of new projects, there's a pretty darn offbeat one coming out soon, courtesy of those British maniacs at Marvel U.K. It's called THE SLEEZE BROTHERS, and it's about the laugh-a-minute adventures of a pair of run-down intergalactic private eyes for whom no job is too big . . . or too revolting! But, hey, what would you expect from a couple of guys whose *landlord* is named **Mr. Cockrosch?**

So if you're looking for something a little different, why not check out a copy of THE SLEEZE BROTHERS? Science fiction has never been this slimy—or this much fun!

ITEM: Okay, here's a quick question: Which MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE personality recently got married? A) **Irving Forbush**, B) **Willie Lumpkin**, C) **Sister Voodoo**, or D) Our own trivia quiz whiz, **Brian Nelson**? We'll give you a hint—it's not Willie Lumpkin!

Yup, you guessed it. Brian tied that knot with **Barbara Calvi** this past February 19th in sunny Los Angeles, California! A hearty congratulations goes out to the happy couple. But say, do you suppose that when they asked Barbara to take Brian as her lawfully wedded husband, she got the answer right?

TOP TEN

THE SENSATIONAL SHE-HULK is a hit! But the mutant books continue to dominate the Top Ten though THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN and THE PUNISHER and WEST COAST AVENGERS are more than holding their own in the stats. As for dependable MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE, we're in solid at #26. The Top Ten is the list of the ten best-selling Marvel titles in the direct sales market as compiled by our Vice President/Direct Sales **Carol Kalish**. This month's list is for January. And here it is:

1—**THE UNCANNY X-MEN** #244
2—**THE SENSATIONAL SHE-HULK** #1
3—**EXCALIBUR** #8
4—**HAVOK AND WOLVERINE Limited Series** #3
5—**WOLVERINE** #7
6—**X-FACTOR** #40
7—**THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN** #315
8—**THE NEW MUTANTS** #75
9—**THE PUNISHER** #19
10—**WEST COAST AVENGERS** #44
26—**MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE** #74

John Byrne changed my mind the other day. We were in my office talking about some of the super-villains he was going to use in his new SENSATIONAL SHE-HULK book, and he mentioned a number of odd-sounding choices—the **Toadmen, Doctor Bong**, the **Black Talon**, etc. I asked him if he wasn't going to come up with some all-new baddies for the jade giantess to tangle with. He said no, not if he could help it. Well, how about on the AVENGERS books, I asked? Aren't you going to try to come up with another **Terminus** or **The Master** or **Omega Flight**, to name but three of John's contributions to the Marvel mythos? No, he replied jauntily (John does everything jauntily), not there either. I was flabbergasted. Here was one of Marvel's top creative talents telling me that he was going to coast, rest on his laurels, content himself to take the creations of others, dust them off a bit, and plug them into his yarns. Surely there was no justice in the world.

Then John patiently explained to me his reasoning . . . and I slowly began to accept the logic behind his alleged laziness. John feels that Marvel has plenty of good under-exploited villains already, and literally dozens of slightly less-than-good villains who only need slight retooling and careful handling to make them top-notch antagonists. That's what he intends to do with the books he's creatively directing—take characters that readers and other writers have dismissed as lame and tired, and show them that they can amount to something, become contenders, justify their existence in the Marvel Universe. I had to admit that I'd seen it done before. **Bullseye** had been a minor gimmick villain until deft handling by **Frank Miller** put him in the winners' circle. **Loki** had become very wearisome and anemic before **Walt Simonson** revitalized him with bold new insights into his character. And think of what a shlep **Mastermind** was before **Chris Claremont** and John Byrne made him the instigator for the original **Dark Phoenix** saga.

John explained that in his view many of today's villainous creations simply duplicated already existing characters in powers, motivation, or personality, if not all three. Not only did these derivitive characters take some of the shine off the original they were ripped from, but they also needlessly cluttered up an already quite populous universe of characters. I could buy that logic. In point of fact, one of my duties as Executive Editor is to coordinate names, powers, and concepts of all new character-creations in order to ensure that we don't have accidental duplication of said names, concepts, and powers. With my fellow editors' cooperation, I stand guard over the uniquenesses of our preexisting characters by insisting that every new character truly has something unique to offer the universe in order to justify his or her existence.

Okay, so new characters should not duplicate old characters. Fine. But what about some of these old villains who nobody in his right mind would want to emulate? Isn't it possible that a villain's very concept was so hackneyed, derivitive, and uninspired, or that a villain had been so badly damaged by years of less than adequate handling, that he is totally unsalvageable? That, after all, was one of the principles behind the "Scourge of the Underworld" killings of 1986, a conspiracy I had no small part in. (For that matter, neither did John Byrne, who co-created the character with me, naming him and designing his uniform.) Part of the rationale behind **Scourge** was that Marvel needed to do a little housecleaning. The Marvel Universe had gotten just too darn large, and there were too many lame, forgettable, throw away villains littering the landscape, begging for an entry in the OFFICIAL HANDBOOK though not deserving one. So Scourge, aided and abetted by a flock of willing writers, went slithering around, making dead meat out of 30 minor villains in no less than ten different Marvel titles. (Okay, so I admit, almost 2/3 of the assassinations were committed in books I wrote.) Was I wrong in advocating that good housekeeping (if not justice) was served in such a manner. . . ?

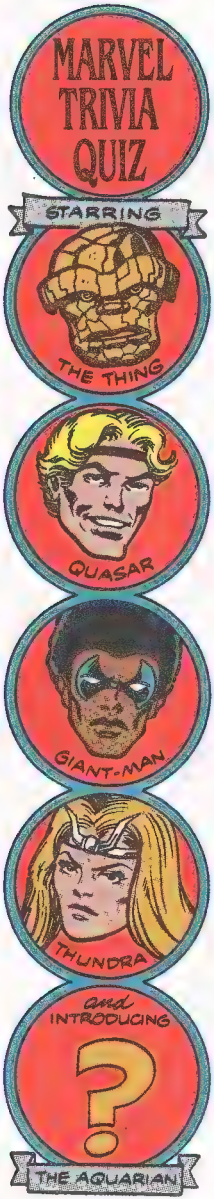
Yes, yes, I now think I was, thanks to that conversation with Mr. Byrne. Let it hereby be known that I, the undersigned, repent. I'm sorry I had any of those lame-o's killed—well, except for **Turner D. Century** maybe. Those of you who rank my penchant for demises right up there with **Thanos's**, I apologize to you if I've taken any of your favorites away. Like **Galactus**, I promise to give to the Universe more than I've taken. And furthermore, I vow to never kill anyone I haven't created again. I am now a staunch advocate of accepting the Byrne Challenge—to take a virtually irredeemable character, and make something out of him or her. I wonder, could it have been done with **Commander Kraken, Mind-Wave**, the **Vamp, Steeplejack**, or **Shellshock** (all villains I had offed in the gruesome CAPTAIN AMERICA #320) . . . sure. And if I couldn't think of how, maybe some other writer could. But not anymore. I'd killed them, prevented them from going on to greater fame in the pages of SHE-HULK. No more, I say. My bloodletting days are over.

So, thanks to John, I've become a Villains-Right-To-Lifer. But does that mean I'm going to shut down my character factory completely, and deprive the world of such classic Gru-creations as **Armadillo, Poundcakes,** and **Boomslang?** Nah, you're not that lucky. I do intend to introduce the new more sparingly perhaps. I still believe as I stated on the text page of SOLO AVENGERS #1, that every Marvel hero deserves at least one arch-enemy all his or her own, and if **Tigra** doesn't have one, by gum, it should be the Tigra writer's job to get her one, preferably without raiding another hero's rogues gallery.

But when it comes to the Byrne Challenge of revitalizing pre-existing super-villains, how does one go about it? A cosmetic change, like a new uniform, is not necessarily the answer—though it did wonders in the **Beetle** and **Boomerang's** cases, both of whom are currently clad in Byrne-designed duds. To truly help a villain reach his or her full potential, a writer must examine what it is that distinguishes this villain from others of his or her ilk and what it is that makes him or her tick. Then the writer must craft a tale where these things are explored. Perhaps there's the potential for greatness, or at least uniqueness, in every unsung villain who's ever taken up space on a page.

You readers are the judges on whether a writer is doing his or her job with the villains he or she portrays. Every time you read a story ask yourself, "Did this story enhance the villain's stature, provide us some keen new insight into his character, or present some interesting new facet to the character's life . . . or did it trivialize him, mess up his continuity, duplicate some old story he appeared in, make you know less about him than you did before, and make you wish you never saw him again?" Let us know, okay?

—Mark Gruenwald



In a curious fashion, **Quasar** is one of Marvel's newest heroes, but also one of its oldest—for he springs from a heroic tradition that dates back to even before the **Fantastic Four**! What do we mean? You'll see as you explore this group of twelve trivia teasers below, assembled with **Wendell** (Quasar) **Vaughn** specifically in mind. What? You thought Quasar had been named after a T.V. set? You'll find out just how much more there is to know about the man who saved Project Pegasus, when you check the quiz answers on page 32!

–Brian Nelson

1. Wendell Vaughn's first appearance in the Marvel Universe threw him into conflict with:
A) **Captain America**
B) **Thundra**
C) the **Thing**
D) federal ethics provisions

2. Quasar's wristbands originally come from:
A) Uranus
B) **Reed Richards'** lab
C) scrap metal from the carcass of **Ultron-5**
D) magic elves

3. MARVEL TEAM-UP saw Quasar possessed by what old sparring partner of **Spider-Man**?
A) **Lightmaster**
B) **Mysterio**
C) **Mesmero**
D) **Mrs. Muggins**

4. The events of the Project Pegasus Saga included Quasar's destruction of what mechanized killer?
A) **Tess-One**
B) **Deathlok**
C) the **Ameridroid**
D) a 1974 Ford Pinto

5. Quasar changed his name from his former alias, **Marvel Man**, because of:
A) copyright problems
B) kids who laughed at him
C) the inspiration of a star in the heavens
D) fear he would become a mere corporate figurehead

6. His last battle under the Marvel Man code-name was against:
A) the **Animus**
B) **Machine Man**
C) the **Hulk**
D) ring-around-the-collar

7. As Marvel Man, Wendell Vaughn was initially a member of what short-lived group?
A) the **New Champions**
B) the **Super-Agents** of S.H.I.E.L.D.
C) the **Marvel** Family
D) **Gary Lewis** and the Playboys

8. The super-powered bracelets Quasar wears were passed to him upon the death of which tragic Fantastic Four opponent?
A) the **Crusader**
B) the **Crimson Crusader**
C) the **Last Crusader**
D) **Crusader Rabbit**

9. And Wendell Vaughn donned those wristlets at the invitation of:
A) his boss at S.H.I.E.L.D.
B) his father
C) his son
D) his tax consultant

10. The hero who originally owned Quasar's wristbands (we were just talking about him two questions ago, remember?) was better known as the 1950s hero, Marvel Boy—whose father was what farsighted scientist?
A) **Dr. Myron MacLain**
B) **Dr. Horace Eberhart**
C) **Dr. Horace Grayson**
D) **Dr. Dick Grayson**

11. The most recent chronicle of Marvel Boy's escapades was published in:
A) MARVEL SUPER-HEROES
B) WORLDS UNKNOWN
C) WHAT IF . . .?
D) THE 'NAM

12. And readers who missed Marvel Boy's 1950s adventures enjoyed them, along with old exploits of **Thor** and the **Human Torch**, in which Marvel reprint book of the 1960s?
A) MARVEL COLLECTOR'S ITEM CLASSICS
B) FANTASY MASTERPIECES
C) MARVEL TALES
D) AUNT MAY'S MEMORY BOOK

BOB HARRAS INTERVIEW

MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE: How did you get involved in comic books?

BOB: I knew I wanted to get a job in publishing, so when I graduated from college I got a job offer at Harcourt and Brace as a sales rep. I hated the idea. I wanted an interesting job. So I came running down here, and knocked on the door and said, "Will you hire me?" I filled out an application and they said, "No, we have no openings." But the next day I got a phone call from Jim Shooter's secretary and she hired me.

MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE: Who did you work for?

BOB: First, I was Shooter's editorial assistant, then when Ralph Macchio was promoted to editor, three months after I started, I became his assistant and that lasted for about two years. Then I was promoted to managing editor and eventually got X-FACTOR to edit. A month after that, Denny O'Neil left staff and I got all of his books and the rest, as they say, is history

MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE: Are you a "Hands on" type of editor?

BOB: Not too hands on. You hire people because you trust them. The only time I am "hands on" is in the plotting stage. I have a very definite idea as to where the books should go. I usually ask the writer for a six-month or a year long story outline, so that I can see where the books are going. If I approve that, then I pretty much sit back for the rest of the things, therefore I work very hard.

MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE: What was it like doing "Inferno"?

BOB: It was fun. It worked out fine. But there were times when we would get lost and have to call each other up and say, "Well, where is the baby supposed to be now?" or "What are the New Mutants doing?" But, like I said it really came out well. We accomplished the things we wanted to do like getting rid of Madelyne Pryor and changing the status quo of Illyana.

MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE: Will there be anymore "Inferno" type crossovers in the future?

BOB: NO! NO! NO! Seriously, this one was planned to be the last one for a while. There is no crossover planned for next year.

MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE: Are you happy with the way the X-Men and X-Factor relate to one another now?

BOB: Yeah, they both are living for the dream, Xavier's dream, but they both have different parts to play. Now they both know that they are alive. It would have been difficult to sustain belief past this

Bob Harras as Mr. Sinister, from the original Marc Silvestri/Dan Green cover Caricature by Steve Buccellato.

year, I think, if they hadn't met. It should probably have been earlier. But because of storylines and the way things were going we just put it off for this year.

MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE: Are there any plans to bring back Prof. Xavier?

BOB: Yes, I don't know exactly when. The original plan is for him to return in X-FACTOR #50. Since we are making Magneto a bad guy again, we need a balance for him.

MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE: Who will be the permanent artist on X-FACTOR?

BOB: I'm not sure at this point. Art Adams has done two issues. Rob Liefeld is doing a couple of issues. Walt Simonson might come back for three more.

MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE: What is ahead for X-Factor?

BOB: At some point they will end up in the Savage Land. They will explore the origins of the ship that they got from Apocalypse, which will take them into outer space, where they will tangle with some cosmic beings; as they find out where the ship actually comes from and where Apocalypse got it.

MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE: Will Apocalypse be popping up anytime soon?

BOB: No, not for the foreseeable future. We used him a lot last year and we don't want to overdo him.

MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE: What will be going on between Scott and Jean?

BOB: They're America's favorite couple (Laughs). I don't know what's going to happen next. I don't think they are going to be getting married anytime soon. We may put them a little bit in the background since it has been "Scott and Jean" since the beginning and we would like to explore the others, like Warren, what's it like for him to be Archangel. Iceman might find a romantic interest. Scott will be dealing with the fact that he has a baby now with no wife and Jean has to deal with the fact that the baby is genetically hers . . . but she didn't give birth to it. And they all have to deal with the fact that they've got a lot of kids, the New Mutants and X-Terminators to take care of.

MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE: Will the baby exhibit any kind of powers?

BOB: He might. Remember, Sinister wanted him because he was genetically perfect. He might be up there with Franklin Richards (son of Reed and Sue Richards of the Fantastic Four.)-as far as mutant potential goes.

MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE: What about Mister Sinister?

BOB: He's a tough guy to kill. There is more to him than meets the eye. It will be a while before we see him again.

MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE: Since the New Mutants will now be living with the X-Terminators and X-Factor are there any plans for crossovers between those two books?

BOB: Maybe, maybe not. I don't think we will have direct crossovers. It would be easy to do since Weezie (Louise Simonson) is writing both books. But I think a little more independance (for the New Mutants) for now is what they need.

MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE: Are the X-Men going to continue to operate

This page: illustrations by Art Adams and Al Milgrom for X-FACTOR.

out of Australia?
BOB: For a while. We have this whole scenario coming up where we are going to use the Siege Perilous, which was something we introduced during the Fall of the Mutants. It hasn't been used since. People are thrown through and start a new life. In #250 the X-Men will be attacked by someone from their past...a member of the Hellfire Club. They will be experiencing some problems and then we'll start a whole new storyline in X-MEN #251, which will surprise some people. It will start in Australia but it certainly won't end there. We're calling it "The Search for the X-Men" or something equally mysterious.
MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE: Will the X-Men still be "dead" to the world?
BOB: They'll be changed. I don't know if they'll still be "dead" at this point. But they will still be legends.
MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE: Will we be seeing the Hellfire Club anytime soon?
BOB: Yes, at least one of them is going to make a move against the X-Men before #250. They are definitely going to start moving again because the Hellfire Club for the past four years has been the most evil organization on the face of the earth that does absolutely nothing. (Laughter). There will be a story in the New Mutants involving Amara's country, Nova Roma, and the Hellfire Club will be involved in that.
MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE: Okay, let's turn to Wolverine and his book. Will he be staying in Madripoor?
BOB: Yes, for a little bit. We are going to have an upcoming story with Mariko; that will explore their relationship. We haven't seen the two of them together for a long time and they have both changed. Wolverine is now Patch and Mariko is the head of a crime organization and Wolverine seems to be getting close to Tyger Tiger. So I think it is time to explore all of that when the book along with THE X-MEN, goes bi-weekly for the summer.
MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE: Will Wolverine be meeting up with any other Marvel characters?
BOB: Yes, probably by the time this is out he will have fought the Hulk. As it stands now there are plans to bring Jean Grey in for an issue to do a "Casablanca"-type story. We also have plans for Archangel to battle Wolverine. It's, basically, anyone we can get to Madripoor.
MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE: Is Wolverine going to get his own annual this year?
BOB: Yes, as of right now Walt Simonson will be the writer and Mike Mignola will be the penciler. Chris wanted to do it but he is just too busy.
MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE: What about the other annuals?
BOB: John Byrne will be writing and penciling the X-FACTOR ANNUAL. Terry Austin will be writing the X-MEN ANNUAL. Again, Chris would have loved to do it but is just too busy. Louise Simonson will most probably be the writer for THE NEW MUTANTS ANNUAL. All of the annuals will be tied into the Atlantis Attacks story that will be running through all of the Marvel annuals this summer.
MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE: Will there be any special limited series coming out?
BOB: The only thing in the works is a second FALLEN ANGELS Limited Series written by Jo Duffy, penciled by Colleen Doran, and inked by Terry Austin. It won't be out for a while. But other than that we have no plans for any more limited series in the immediate future.
MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE: Anything else you would like to say about any of the books?
BOB: Yeah, Buy them, make me rich. Just kidding. I just think that they are a lot of fun. I'm very happy with the direction that they are going in and I am very happy with the creative personnel. What else could an editor want?

—Eric Fein

A scene from the upcoming FALLEN ANGELS Limited Series written by Joe Duffy, penciled by Colleen Doran, and inked by Terry Austin.

DOCTOR STRANGE AND DOCTOR DOOM

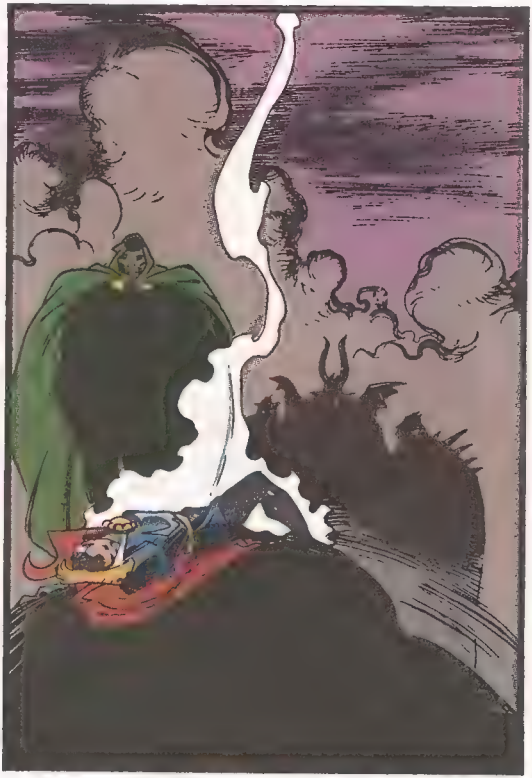
TRIUMPH AND TORMENT

Two of Marvel's greatest characters (and its two most famous "Doctors"), the Sorcerer Supreme, **Doctor Strange** and the greatest of all Marvel villains, **Doctor Doom**, join forces for the first time in "Triumph and Torment," a 78-page hardcover graphic novel written by **Roger Stern**, penciled by **Mike Mignola**, inked and colored by **Mark Badger**, and edited by **Ralph Macchio**. The novel follows the two Doctors as they compete with each other in a contest of mystic might and then together descend into **Mephisto**'s Netherworld to rescue a lost soul. "Triumph and Torment" is designed both for people who know the two characters and want to find out more about them, and for newcomers to Marvel who may be unfamiliar with either Doom or Strange. Roger Stern points out that, "It is structured so that if you've never read a word about Doctor Strange or Doctor Doom, you'll know who they are through reading this novel."

This is a graphic novel that literally has been years in the making. Roger Stern explains, "It originated in 1982, shortly after graphic novels first began. I was asked to think of ideas for graphic novels. So I sat down and thought of a bunch of them, and this is the one that was liked the best.

"There was always this idea in the back of my mind. Years and years ago in AMAZING ADVENTURES there was a story that **Gene Colan** drew that had Doctor Doom going out on a midsummer night's eve to confront the forces of Hades to try to win freedom for his mother's soul, since she'd been a witch, and had gotten involved in some sort of infernal pact and her soul had been forfeited to the powers of darkness. He did this every year. It was a very short story, and it was a very interesting idea. And nothing further was ever really done with it.

"It struck me that if Doom was really going to win freedom for his mother's soul, he'd get involved with something like direct assault of the underworld, much like the old tales in classical



mythology of **Hercules** (and other heroes) going in. I thought if Doctor Doom was going to do that, he'd need big mystical assistance. He's schooled in sorcery as well as science, something that's mostly been ignored since FANTASTIC FOUR #5 (Doom's very first appearance). He's tops in science, but of course he isn't the world's greatest sorcerer, because that's Doctor Strange. So if he were going into Hades, he'd want the world's greatest

sorcerer at his side. But Doom wouldn't just ask Doctor Strange because Doom does not beg. There's that big pride factor there. So instead he would manipulate Strange into helping him somehow.

"Out of that grew the whole idea of the confab of sorcerers assembling once every hundred years. Who would call them together? I was going through some old DOCTOR STRANGE stories one day, and I came across the **Aged Genghis**, who turns up every now and again. He's been around. He's older than dirt. Slowly but surely the idea grew in my mind that the Aged Genghis has all of this incredible knowledge in his head, and it's too much for any mortal mind to really hold. It's made him senile, plus the fact that he's several thousand years old. Once every hundred years he becomes lucid enough to make use of this knowledge, and calls together this great grand meeting of the world's greatest sorcerers. He sends out this call that only the best sorcerers on Earth can hear. He presides over this meeting. There's a tournament held to determine who is Earth's Sorcerer Supreme. **The Ancient One** was Sorcerer Supreme for five centuries running. Doctor Strange was his disciple and has been assumed to be Sorcerer Supreme. But here's where it's proven. This makes it official until the next meeting a hundred years from now."

"The call goes out, and only the greatest sorcerers on Earth can hear it. Twelve great sorcerers show up from around the world and under the ocean: an Atlantean sorcerer shows up as well. And Doctor Doom arrives, who is just barely able to hear (the call as) this whisper on the winds. They get involved in this big tournament, and the winner of the tournament is Doctor Strange. But it turns out that the winner of the tournament, the Sorcerer Supreme, is bound to grant a boon to the runner-up, who is Doctor Doom." This does not mean that Doom is the second greatest sorcerer on Earth, but through clever strategy Doom managed to place second in the tournament. "Doctor Strange says, 'I'm not going to grant him a boon. I'm not going to help him conquer the world.' And Doom says, 'I don't need your help for that. All I ask is that you assist me in rescuing my mother's soul from the forces of darkness. Or is the matter of one woman's soul beneath the Sorcerer Supreme?' Strange is taken aback by this. He's still kind of doubtful about the whole thing, but he agrees to go along with it.

"Strange is put up as a guest at Castle Doom, and learns a great deal of Doom's background from **Boris**, the old manservant. After much preparation Doom and Strange enter into Hades to confront Mephisto and try to win back the soul of Doom's mother. And of course Mephisto has a lot of tricks along the way.

"Since it is a graphic novel, I've taken the novel part very seriously. There are many stories in the framework of this novel, building finally to the climax at the end. Part of the story is that the Aged Genghis has met both Doctor Doom and Doctor Strange very early in both of their respective careers. Their paths had once nearly crossed, and the Aged Genghis had been there at the crossroads."

The graphic novel's story has Doctor Doom ruling Latveria, although in the current continuity, Doom's throne has been usurped by the child, **Kristoff**. Hence, the graphic novel's story is set sometime in the future, shortly after Doom regains his throne for however long a period of time. Originally, Roger wanted the graphic novel to come out at a time when its events could clearly fit into the current continuity of both Strange's own regular series and Doom's "home" magazine, the FANTASTIC FOUR. This is one of the reasons why it took so long for the novel to come out after Roger had gotten the original ideas for the story.

"I delayed coming up with the actual plot for the story for a number of years," Roger recalls. "I was writing DOCTOR STRANGE when I first came up with the idea for the story, and **John Byrne** was writing and drawing the FANTASTIC FOUR at that time, and I talked over various parts of the story with him over the years. At one point there was this long storyline in the FANTASTIC FOUR involving Doctor Doom supposedly being dead. So I held off until that story was done, and started physically committing the plot to paper in 1985. I think it was the spring of 1987 when I finished the plot. While I was doing all this, of course, I was always writing two or more series myself. I held off at various times so as not to conflict with other events going to in the regular comics. Finally I decided I would just have to do it and let the pieces fall where they may. Also along the way I was looking for the right artist to do it. There were various artists who expressed interest in the story at one point or another. But there were always schedule conflicts, or they weren't able to do it for one reason or another. But once the plot was finished, we were able to get Mike Mignola. This was the summer of 1987. He had some commitments, so he wasn't able to start drawing until late in 1987. He finished it over the period of about a year. So I was writing it over the same length of time and finished it early in 1989." But it was well worth the wait, since Roger and editor **Ralph Macchio** are both very pleased and impressed with Mike's pencils for the book.

Asked how he handles the two doctors in the novel, Roger says, "I'm really getting into the humanity of both characters, trading on the similarities and the differences. Doctor Strange was once a very worldly man who found enlightenment, whereas Doctor Doom is a very earthly man, of gypsy stock, middle European stock, who aspires to greatness. Everything he learns is but a means to an end. Doom is a much more prideful man than Strange was even at his most jaded. Strange has found this enlightenment, but still is prone to human weakness and frailty. Doom has certain weaknesses and frailties but guards them at every instance. The armor he wears is almost a symbol of the way he keeps the world at a distance.

"The story originated as a DOCTOR STRANGE graphic novel, and in the writing of the plot it almost became a DOCTOR DOOM graphic novel, because Doom's personality was so strong he started taking over the book. In the final writing I think they both hold their own as co-stars.

"It's one of the hardest projects I ever worked on. Certainly one of the longest writing projects I've ever worked on (laughter)! At the same time it was a very satisfying experience These are two of the most interesting characters ever to come out of Marvel Comics, if not comics in general." And Roger gives the credit for this to the creators of Doctor Doom and Doctor Strange, or, as he puts it, "the genius of **Stan Lee** and **Jack Kirby** and **Steve Ditko**. If it were not for those three guys, this book would not have been possible

—Peter Sanderson

...AND WE'RE BACK ON MARVELOUSLY SPEAKING. I'M YOUR HOST, FRED HEMBECK, AND I THINK IT'S TIME WE OPENED OUR PHONES UP TO THE LISTENERS AND GIVE EVERYONE A CHANCE TO TALK TO OUR GUEST, THE STAR OF HIS VERY OWN BRAND NEW MONTHLY MARVEL COMICS SERIES, QUASAR.
ON LINE ONE WE HAVE CHARLIE FROM LEVITTOWN. GO AHEAD, CHARLIE
HELLO FRED, THIS IS CHARLIE FROM LEVITTOWN. YOU HAVE A GREAT SHOW...
THANK YOU.
...AND I HAVE A QUESTION FOR YOUR GUEST.
ASK AWAY!
I'VE ENJOYED FOLLOWING YOUR ADVENTURES IN THE PAST -
THANK YOU.
...AND I'M VERY PLEASED TO HEAR YOU'RE GOING TO BE SEEN AGAIN ON A REGULAR BASIS...
YOU AND ME BOTH!!
huh?
MY GUEST TONIGHT IS QUASAR, NOT KA-ZAR.
Q·U·A·S·A·R··· QUASAR.
NOT KA-ZAR?
uh uh. QUASAR.
oh.
SORRY. NEVER HEARD OF HIM.
CLICK
um, PERHAPS I SHOULD MENTION FOR THOSE FOLKS WHO MIGHT NOT REMEMBER, BACK IN THE FIFTIES ANOTHER FELLOW USED THE SAME POWER BANDS AND WORE A SIMILAR UNIFORM, USING THE NAME "MARVEL BOY." FACT IS, EARLY IN MY CAREER, I WENT BY THE NAME OF "MARVEL MAN."
BEFORE I TAKE THE NEXT CALL, LET ME STRESS ONCE AGAIN TO OUR AUDIENCE THAT TONIGHT WE'RE TALKING ABOUT QUASAR. QUASAR IS ALL WE'RE TALKING ABOUT. SO, IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS ABOUT QUASAR, PLEASE, CALL IN! JUST REMEMBER: QUASAR.
ALL RIGHT, WE'LL TRY ONE MORE CALL... AL FROM MIAMI, YOU'RE ON THE AIR?
YEAH, THIS IS AL FROM MIAMI.. I JUST TUNED IN, AND I GOT A COMMENT ABOUT QUASAR...
FINALLY!
WELL, IT WAS BOUND TO HAPPEN SOONER OR LATER..
GO AHEAD SIR, WE'RE ALL EARS!!

...BUT I WAS WONDERING, JUST HOW MUCH OF A ROLE WILL YOUR WIFE, SHANNA, BE PLAYING IN THIS NEW SERIES?
uh, SIR?..
AND LET'S NOT FORGET ZABU--HE WAS ALWAYS ONE OF MY BIG FAVORITES
SIR?
AND I'M REAL CURIOUS WILL YOUR ADVENTURES BE TAKING PLACE IN THE SAVAGE LAND OR SOME BIG CITY LIKE NEW YORK?
SIR!!
LET'S TAKE ANOTHER CALL--MARK FROM DETROIT--GO AHEAD, MARK.
HI, FRED. THIS IS MARK FROM DETROIT. I HAVE A FEW QUESTIONS REGARDING YOUR GUEST'S PAST...
FIRE AWAY
WHATEVER HAPPENED TO PROFESSOR X? AND NOW THAT YOU'RE IN X-FACTOR HOW DOES IT FEEL TO HAVE A BUNCH OF RELATIVE NEWCOMERS RUNNING AROUND WITH THE NAME OF "X-MEN"? AFTER ALL, AS AN ORIGINAL MEMBER--
THAT'S "MARVEL GIRL" YOU'RE THINKING OF. I'M RE "TALKING ABOUT" "MARVEL BOY" AND "MARVEL MAN", NOT MARVEL GIRL. BELIEVE ME, THERE'S A BIG DIFFERENCE! NO HARD'S, MY GUEST IS KNOWN AS QUASAR.
QUASAR?
YES, QUASAR. DO YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS FOR QUASAR?
UH, NO, SORRY.
CLICK
WELL, LATELY WHEN THE WEATHER'S BEEN CLOUDY, MY PICTURE'S BEEN ACTING UP. I HATE TO ADMIT IT, BUT MAYBE MY BUDDIES WERE RIGHT--MAYBE I SHOULDA BOUGHT A SONY!
WHAT DO YOU THINK?..
....
...HELLO? ANYBODY THERE? ...HELLO?...
AAAAAAAAA!!
Y'KNOW FOLKS IF YOU GOT TO KNOW ME, YOU JUST MIGHT LIKE ME ALL I'M ASKING FOR IS A CHANCE. AND IF YOU DON'T FIND ME TO YOUR LIKING WELL, I'LL TELL KA-ZAR YOU WERE ASKING FOR M.M...

STAN'S SOAPBOX

Hi, Heroes! This issue I want to answer the one question you've been asking more than any other in your letters. That question is—

"Tell us about the movie and T.V. projects that are in the works for Marvel."

As you know, when the voices of Marveldom Assembled speak, we in the Bullpen can do naught but listen and obey! So lend an ear, frantic ones, while I lay the latest scoop on you.

By the time you read this, you'll certainly have already seen the second big **Hulk** show of the season, co-starring everybody's favorite man without fear, the sightless but sensational **Daredevil**. If the ratings are as phenominal as we're hoping they'll be, there's a good chance that the network will spin DD off into his own series, so you'll be able to catch him on the tube every week. As for Green-Skin's next T.V. movie, NBC is thinking of co-featuring another Marvel super star. My lips are sealed so I can't yet tell you who, but here's a hint—at the moment it's a tossup between some guy in an iron suit and a super-strong female who's related to **Bruce Banner**! The network can't get angry; nobody could figure out who they are from such sparse and flimsy clues!

Now then, even as your awestricken eyes peruse this rollicking report, *The Punisher* will have already hit the screen, or be just about to. Starring **Dolph Lundgren** and **Lou Gossett**, it will be the second major production to bring a Marvel character to life on the big screen. The *first* production of a Marvel character, namely poor ol' *Howard The Duck*, has already achieved a sort-of legendary status, although it's not exactly the type of legend we were looking for. You might say he's received a sort-of reverse immortality in a world he never made! But we're all hoping that the Punisher'll be a tougher nut to crack!

Now let's talk about **Sub-Mariner**! I just returned from Shelby, North Carolina, where Earl Owensby Productions has the world's largest underwater tank which was originally used for atomic nuclear projects. It's the studio where *The Abyss* was filmed. So I'll bet you can guess what's coming next. Right! We finally found the perfect place to film the first movie starring **Namor**, Prince of the Blood, Lord of the Deep, Hereditary Monarch of Fabled Atlantis! Now, as soon as we can find an actor who can say all that without stumbling . . .

Next on the agenda is the strong possibility of a feature film starring **Tony Stark**. (I don't want to mention that he's **Iron Man**, because it might be dangerous to divulge his identity in case any of DC's espionage agents might have gained access to this page!) But even as we speak, we're gathering a great team of screenwriter, director and producer, and your local theater may well be filled with roaring repulsor rays by this time next year!

Since HOW TO DRAW COMICS THE MARVEL WAY and THE X-MEN were such terrific hits in video cassette, we're planning to do an entire Marvel Library which you can buy or rent and play at home on your VHS. I'll keep you posted as soon as we decide exactly which titles to record, but this concept is sure to be the sensation of the year!

Y'know, one of the most difficult problems in producing a movie is getting the right script. Well, someone wrote a screenplay for *Captain America* which is just sensational. So you know what that means! In the next few weeks we expect to get all the contracts signed and that's when the fun will start; that's when the search begins for the perfect actor to play our star-spangled Sentinel of Liberty. Ah, if only I was a few months younger—but they'd probably want me to shave off my moustache!

If you thought I'd end this lilting little excursion into culture without mentioning the **X-Men**, forget it! We were all so excited by fandom's enthusiastic reaction to their animated videotape that we're planning a major new surprise. I'm not sure we can pull it off, but we'll give it the ol' school try. I want to keep it as a surprise for now, but if it looks like the project is a go, I'll tell you what's in the wind for our motley mutant crew here on this page next issue! And y'know what? You'll freak when you hear it!

By the way, remember *the Fantastic Four* film project? **Bernd Eichinger**, the producer who did *The Never-Ending Story* and *The Name of the Rose* among many other brilliant productions, is a long-time FF fan. He wants the saga of **Reed Richards** and his tumultuous team to be one of the biggest megamovies of all time. Now that he's just about finished with his newest feature film, *Last Exit to Brooklyn*, he's finally ready to begin work on the FF, a fact that has us all cheering! Naturally, I'll clue you in to his progress as we go rolling along.

There will, of course, be more projects coming up, and I'll make sure that you're the first to know. But, till then, take care of yourself, don't tease **Galactus** and be tolerant of those who have not yet joined the ranks of Marveldom, for surely they knoweth not what they do! And hey, in case you forgot, "Honi soit qui mal y pense!"

Excelsior!

Stan

WILLIE LUMPKIN

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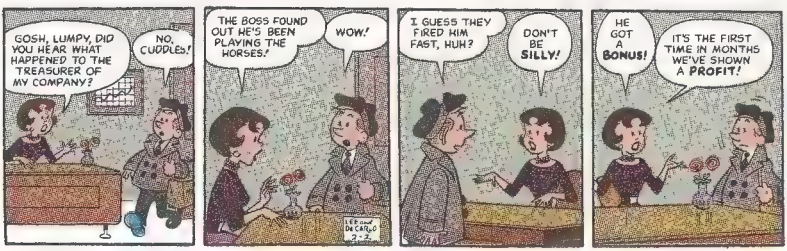
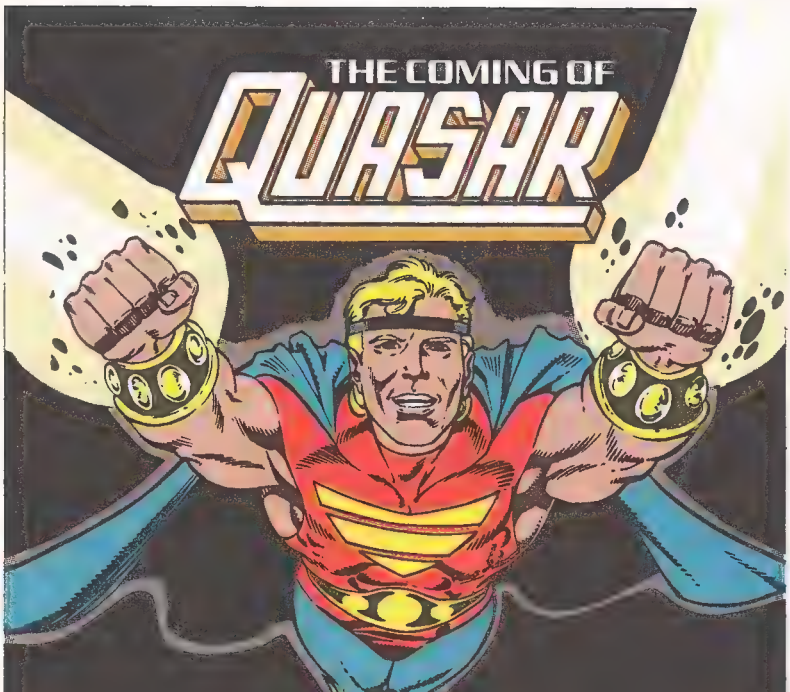

GOSH, LUMPY, DID YOU HEAR WHAT HAPPENED TO THE TREASURER OF MY COMPANY?
NO, CUDDLES!
THE BOSS FOUND OUT HE'S BEEN PLAYING THE HORSES!
WOW!
LEE and DeCARLO
I GUESS THEY FIRED HIM FAST, HUH?
DON'T BE SILLY!
HE GOT A BONUS!
IT'S THE FIRST TIME IN MONTHS WE'VE SHOWN A PROFIT!



Once there was a boy whose father took him to the distant planet, Uranus, where they met the inhabitants of a lost civilization. The boy returned to Earth wearing wristbands that gave him extraordinary powers, and became the super hero known as **Marvel Boy**. But the boy returned to Uranus only to learn that his father and their Uranian benefactors were dead. Marvel Boy returned to Earth and, having gone insane, went on a rampage under the name of the **Crusader**. The **Fantastic Four** defeated him, and he died in a great explosion, leaving only the wristbands behind. The bands came into the hands of **Dr. Gilbert Vaughn**, a scientist with a son, **Wendell**, who had failed in his effort to become a combat agent for the law enforcement agency, S.H.I.E.L.D. But one day Wendell donned the bands himself and became the super hero known as **Quasar**. And now he will discover that there is far more to the origin of his strange wristbands than any Earthman had dreamed.

Now Wendell Vaughn will star in his own regular monthly series, QUASAR, written by executive editor, **Mark Gruenwald**, also known as the scripter for CAPTAIN AMERICA, D.P.7, and SQUADRON SUPREME, with art by the longtime D.P.7 team of **Paul Ryan** and **Danny Bulanadi**. **Howard Mackie** is the series editor.

Quasar has been a supporting character in Marvel series for many years, making his debut under the less than dynamic name of **Marvel Man** in a CAPTAIN AMERICA story a decade ago. Why did Mark Gruenwald want to give him his own series at long last? Mark explains that, "I thought he had a lot of untapped potential for bringing a human side to cosmic characters. The cosmic characters that Marvel has done in the past have all been aliens —the **Silver Surfer**, **Captain Marvel**, even **Rom**—or an artificially created being like **Adam Warlock**. We've yet to have a series that had a space or cosmic hero from a human perspective."

Mark points out that another reason why Marvel fans should like the new series is that, "It has a great art team, Paul Ryan and Danny Bulanadi." Paul collaborated with Mark on the entire thirty-two issue run of D.P.7 as well as on the final issues of the SQUADRON SUPREME Limited Series and the forthcoming SQUADRON SUPREME

Graphic Novel. Paul is also now doing breakdowns for THE AVENGERS. Among his many other credits, Danny inked the last two thirds of the run of D.P.7. In fact Paul and Danny spent longer on D.P.7 than any other artists did on a New Universe series. Mark points out that "When they sign onto a book, they're in for a long run."

Mark's interest in Quasar goes back to his featured role in the "Project Pegasus Saga," written by Mark and **Ralph Macchio** with art by **John Byrne** and **George Perez**, in MARVEL TWO-IN-ONE. This storyline has recently been republished as a trade paperback. Years ago Mark submitted a proposal for a series involving Quasar (as well as the **Reject** from **Jack Kirby**'s ETERNALS series) that was in various ways like the current one. He reworked the proposal and resubmitted it years later, and now Quasar's series is a reality.

The first issue is actually set in the past and fills out much of the title character's background. For one thing, we learn that Quasar's full real name is Wendell Elvis Vaughn, and that he prefers to be called "Elvis." "He never had a middle name," Mark explains, so he decided to give him one that he thought might "give him more personality." In the first issue we see how Wendell Elvis Vaughn tries to prove himself by becoming an agent for S.H.I.E.L.D., but is disappointed by being assigned a non-combat role. But then, when agents of the subversive organization **A.I.M.** attack, the young Vaughn uses the Uranian wristbands to fight them off and thus first becomes a super hero.

In the second issue, set more closely to the present, Quasar journeys to the planet Uranus on a scientific mission for his father. On this mission Wendell Elvis Vaughn must come to terms with his own mixed feelings about his life as he confronts the sinister **Deathurge**, the embodiment of the death wish, and an even more mysterious being known as **Eon**.

Although Mark refers to QUASAR as a cosmic series, after its initial two issues it will be set on Earth in the present for roughly its first year. "You can do stories that are set on Earth that are cosmic," he explains. "Most stories people think of as cosmic are about ideas, about the wonders of the universe.

First of all, QUASAR will be cosmic in terms of its title character's role in the cosmos." Mark explains that, "Quasar has a pupil-mentor relationship with Eon, the eight-billion-year-old-plus cosmic couch potato. Well Eon looks something like a gigantic potato, but, as followers of the CAPTAIN MARVEL series in the 1970s may recall, Eon is a cosmically aware being whose role is to guard the development of life throughout the universe. Throughout history he has appointed **Protectors of the Universe**; the last one was Captain Mar-Vell himself. But now Mar-Vell is dead, and Eon chooses Quasar as the next Protector of the Universe. It was Eon who created the wristbands that Quasar wears. Traditionally, they have been worn by the Protector of the Universe, although they became lost and somehow fell into he hands of the Uranians, who gave them to Marvel Boy.

Quasar's first mission, although much of his activity will center on Earth, will also have cosmic implications. "Eon tells him that there will be a threat to the universe that will come from space but will manifest itself on Earth. This sounds a lot like aliens, so Quasar starts checking out all the aliens that are currently residents on Earth." And there are a lot more than you might think! There is **Firelord**, the **New Mutants' Warlock**, the **Aquarian, Doctor Minerva** of the **Kree**, the **Sub-Mariner**'s friend, **Tamara**, the children of the Sub-Mariner's deceased wife, **Marrina**, and many more. Quasar goes about checking on these aliens in a "systematic, logical" manner, Mark says.

And finally QUASAR will be cosmic in that it will delve into the mysteries of the workings of the laws of the universe. "What I mean by cosmic is that in issue 4 Quasar battles **Quantum**, an alien who previously appeared in WEST COAST AVENGERS, and we'll actually find out how quantum theory physics relate to his powers. That hasn't been developed in comics before. It's a science concept handled fictionally, thus it's a science-fiction concept." In QUASAR Mark hopes to deal in "hard" science fiction—science fiction based on actual science—more than other super hero comic series have. "And new science," he adds, reflecting relatively new theories and developments.

What kind of personality will Quasar display? In his first two issues Quasar is driven by feelings of disappointment in the way his life has turned out. "He's not always going to be so dour," Mark says. But in life you have your up swings and your down swings, and before the dawn you've got to face your darkest hour, and he does that in issue 2" when he confronts Deathurge.

"He takes his job very seriously. He's a logical, well-prepared, eager-beaver type, but he's not stuffy. Right now he seems a little stuffy because we haven't seen much of his personal life. There are a few likable, interesting quirks in his personality, though."

Quasar is not an infallible hero, as Mark believes Captain America, whose series he also writes, is. Quasar will indeed make mistakes at times. "I can't relate to infallible heroes. But they're fun to write. Captain America is pretty much infallible. I like having his infallibility trip him up. Quasar isn't like that. But I want him to gain self-assurance as he goes on. He becomes Protector of the Universe in issue 2. That's a big responsibility. He doesn't even know how much that means at this point. It sounds like a lot, but he has no inkling what that entails. So you wouldn't expect him to be too self-assured when he doesn't even know what the job is."

Quasar's supporting cast will include several women who will be potential love interests. "Not that he's going to be a play-the-field kind of guy," Mark says. "He has his mission to worry about."

Quasar's scientist father, Dr. Gilbert Vaughn, will also appear regularly. "Quasar's going to have this problem with father images and authority figures," Mark states. "His father was not a very demonstrative or loving kind of father; he was rather cold and critical." Gilbert Vaughn's personality influenced the development of his son's, and, Mark points out that to a degree Quasar "finds himself acting like his father."

But the strangest of the regular cast members will surely be Eon himself. So as better to protect Eon from the mysterious menace that Quasar is trying to locate, Quasar brings Eon to Earth with him, and installs him in a room in his offices at Four Freedoms Plaza, the complex that also serves as the headquarters for the Fantastic Four. Eon does not have emotions like human beings, but, Mark notes, "we will see some humanizing of him. He's going to become close friends with Quasar's father."

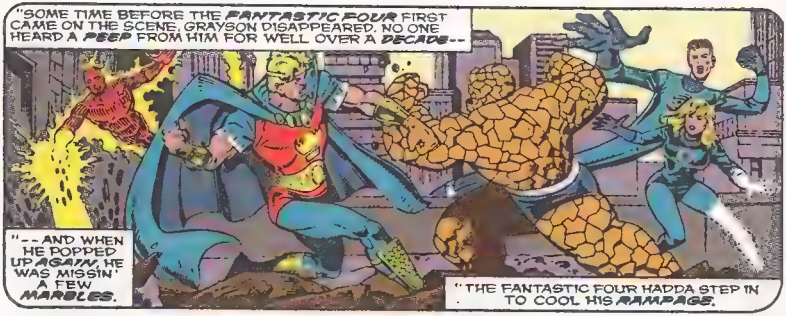
Eon is indeed cosmically aware, but "that doesn't mean you know everything in the cosmos at a given time," Mark states. "It means you can know everything in the universe, but you have to select what it is you want to know. Eon can know things by exploring certain paths of knowledge in the universe, but he doesn't know everything automatically." Hence, Eon knows that a menace to the universe is arising, but he does not yet know exactly what that menace is.

Summing up, Mark points out that Marvel has never published a series starting with the letter "Q" before, although it has published a cosmic series starting with the next letter "R," ROM. "So I hope this lasts longer than ROM," he declares, laughing.

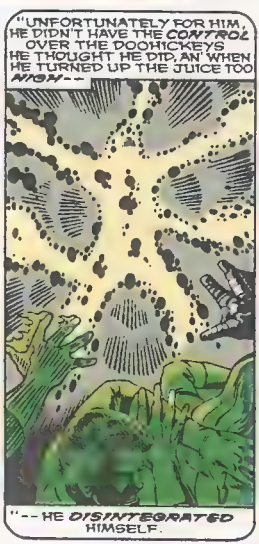
—Peter Sanderson

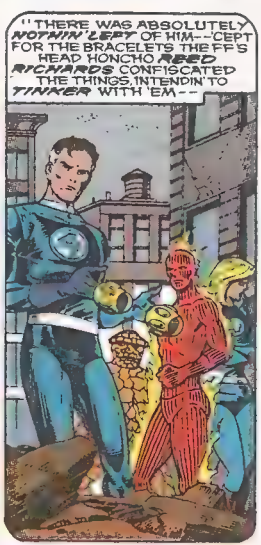
STAN LEE PRESENTS THE ORIGIN OF
QUASAR
"THE KID IN THE CAPE AND COSTUME IS THE ONLY SON OF THE FAMOUS GERMAN ROCKET SCIENTIST WHO DEFECTED TO THE WEST IN THE 30'S HORACE GRASSNER.
"HE USED 'EM PRIMARILY FOR BUNTING HIS OPPONENTS IN A ONE MAN CRUSADE AGAINST CRIMINALS AND COMMUNISTS BACK IN THE EARLY 50'S.
"HIS NAME'S ROBERT GRAYSON, BUT HE WAS BETTER KNOWN AS MARVEL BOY FAR AS WE CAN TELL, HE WAS THE FIRST GUY TO EVER WEAR THOSE FUNKY GLOWING BRACELETS WE'RE ALL INTERESTED IN.
"GOTTA ADMIRE THE KID'S SPUNK, HUH?
"WHERE HE GOT THOSE FANCY WRIST-BANDS WE DON'T KNOW, BUT IT'S RUMORED THAT GRAYSON AND HIS DAD SPENT SOME TIME ON A ROCKET IN DEEP SPACE
THE PRICE OF POWER!

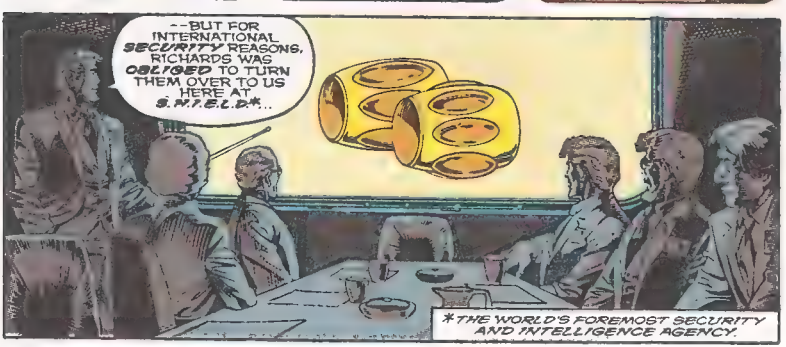
mark GRUENWALD STORY • paul RYAN BREAKDOWNS • danny BULANADI FINISHES • janice CHIANG LETTERS • paul BECTON COLORS • howard MACKIE EDITS • tom DEFALCO CHIEF

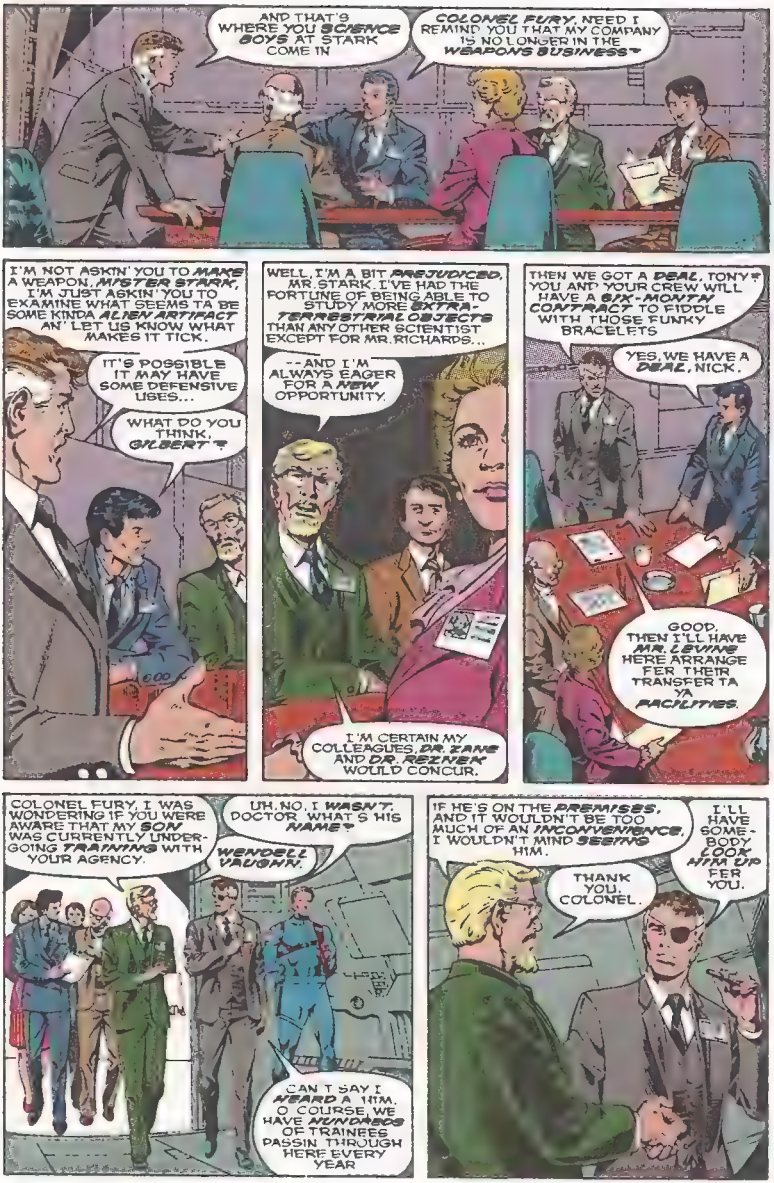

"SOME TIME BEFORE THE FANTASTIC FOUR FIRST CAME ON THE SCENE, GRAYSON DISAPPEARED. NO ONE HEARD A PEEP FROM HIM FOR WELL OVER A DECADE--
"--AND WHEN HE POPPED UP AGAIN, HE WAS MISSIN' A FEW MARBLES.
"THE FANTASTIC FOUR HADDA STEP IN TO COOL HIS RAMPAGE.

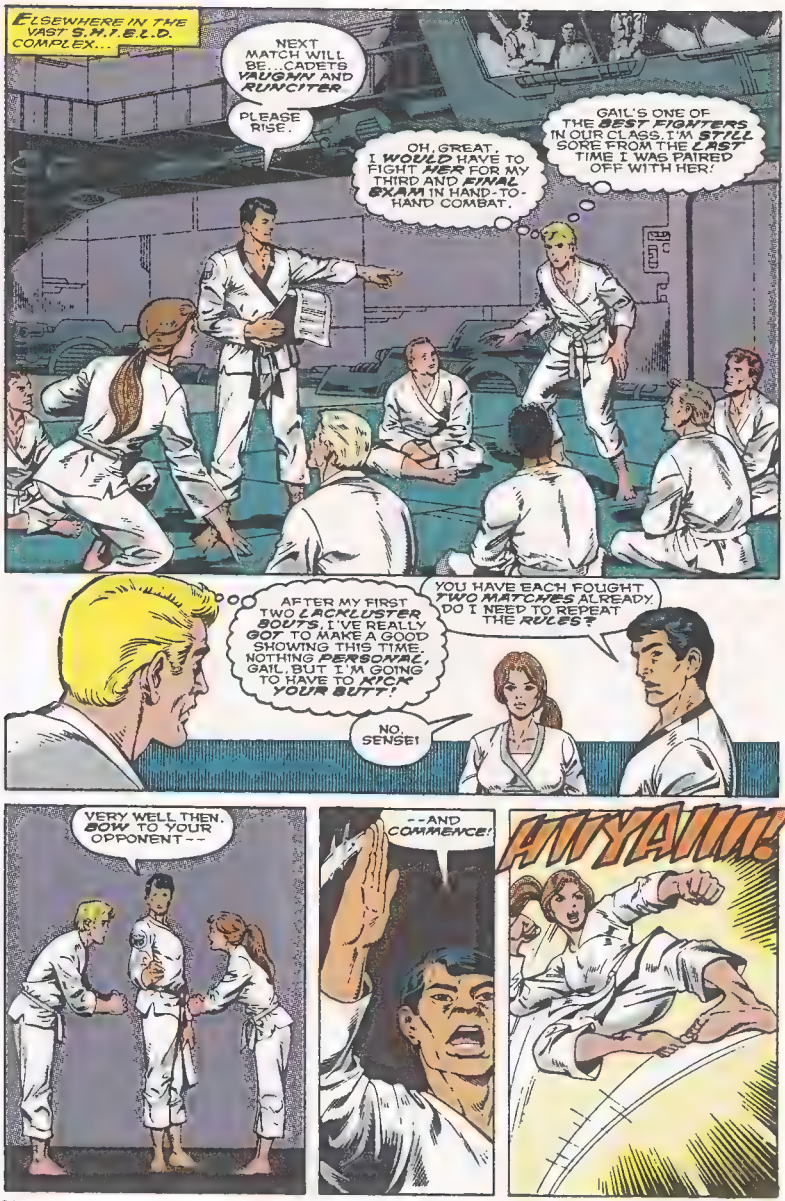
"SOMEWHERE IN THAT TIME HE LEARNED TO TURN UP THE POWER ON THOSE WRIST-GIZMOS, AN' INSTEAD A JUST USIN' 'EM TO SHOOT BLINDIN' LIGHT--
"--HE WAS NOW USIN' 'EM TO FLY AN' SHOOT LETHAL SOLAR-BLASTS.


"UNFORTUNATELY FOR HIM, HE DIDN'T HAVE THE CONTROL OVER THE DOOHICKEYS HE THOUGHT HE DID, AN' WHEN HE TURNED UP THE JUICE TOO HIGH--
"--HE DISINTEGRATED HIMSELF.


"THERE WAS ABSOLUTELY NOTHIN' LEFT OF HIM--'CEPT FOR THE BRACELETS THE FF'S HEAD HONCHO REED RICHARDS CONFISCATED THE THINGS, INTENDIN' TO TINKER WITH 'EM--


--BUT FOR INTERNATIONAL SECURITY REASONS, RICHARDS WAS OBLIGED TO TURN THEM OVER TO US HERE AT S.H.I.E.L.D.*..
*THE WORLD'S FOREMOST SECURITY AND INTELLIGENCE AGENCY.


AND THAT'S WHERE YOU SCIENCE BOYS AT STARK COME IN
COLONEL FURY, NEED I REMIND YOU THAT MY COMPANY IS NO LONGER IN THE WEAPONS BUSINESS
I'M NOT ASKIN' YOU TO MAKE A WEAPON, MISTER STARK, I'M JUST ASKIN' YOU TO EXAMINE WHAT SEEMS TA BE SOME KINDA ALIEN ARTIFACT AN' LET US KNOW WHAT MAKES IT TICK.
IT'S POSSIBLE IT MAY HAVE SOME DEFENSIVE USES...
WHAT DO YOU THINK, GILBERT
WELL, I'M A BIT PREJUDICED, MR. STARK. I'VE HAD THE FORTUNE OF BEING ABLE TO STUDY MORE EXTRA-TERRESTRIAL OBJECTS THAN ANY OTHER SCIENTIST EXCEPT FOR MR. RICHARDS...
--AND I'M ALWAYS EAGER FOR A NEW OPPORTUNITY.
I'M CERTAIN MY COLLEAGUES, DR. ZANE AND DR. REZNEK WOULD CONCUR.
THEN WE GOT A DEAL, TONY YOU AND YOUR CREW WILL HAVE A SIX-MONTH CONTRACT TO FIDDLE WITH THOSE FUNKY BRACELETS
YES, WE HAVE A DEAL, NICK.
GOOD. THEN I'LL HAVE MR. LEVINE HERE ARRANGE FER THEIR TRANSFER TA YA FACILITIES.
COLONEL FURY, I WAS WONDERING IF YOU WERE AWARE THAT MY SON WAS CURRENTLY UNDERGOING TRAINING WITH YOUR AGENCY.
UH, NO, I WASN'T. DOCTOR, WHAT'S HIS NAME
WENDELL VAUGHN.
CAN'T SAY I HEARD A HIM. O COURSE, WE HAVE HUNDREDS OF TRAINEES PASSIN THROUGH HERE EVERY YEAR
IF HE'S ON THE PREMISES, AND IT WOULDN'T BE TOO MUCH OF AN INCONVENIENCE, I WOULDN'T MIND SEEING HIM.
THANK YOU, COLONEL.
I'LL HAVE SOMEBODY LOOK HIMM UP FER YOU.


ELSEWHERE IN THE VAST S.H.I.E.L.D. COMPLEX...
NEXT MATCH WILL BE...CADETS VAUGHN AND RUNCITER.
PLEASE RISE.
OH, GREAT. I WOULD HAVE TO FIGHT HER FOR MY THIRD AND FINAL EXAM IN HAND-TO-HAND COMBAT.
GAIL'S ONE OF THE BEST FIGHTERS IN OUR CLASS. I'M STILL SORE FROM THE LAST TIME I WAS PAIRED OFF WITH HER!
AFTER MY FIRST TWO LACKLUSTER BOUTS, I'VE REALLY GOT TO MAKE A GOOD SHOWING THIS TIME. NOTHING PERSONAL, GAIL, BUT I'M GOING TO HAVE TO KICK YOUR BUTT!
YOU HAVE EACH FOUGHT TWO MATCHES ALREADY. DO I NEED TO REPEAT THE RULES?
NO SENSE!
VERY WELL THEN. BOW TO YOUR OPPONENT--
--AND COMMENCE!
AIIYAIIII!

FLYING SIDE KICK INTO A SPINNING BACK KICK HER FAVORITE COMBINATION
I'M READY FOR IT THIS TIME.
I'M BETTER WITH PUNCHES THAN KICKS, LET ME TRY TO ALTER HIS LITTLE EXHIBITION TOWARD MY STRENGTHS.
HA!
NO, SHE ALMOST GOT ME WITH THAT FLOOR SWEEP AND DISABLED THE INITIATIVE AGAIN!
AND IN THE OPPOSITE QUARTER...
IF YA'LL STEP THIS WAY, DOC YA SHOULD GET A SQUINT OF YER BOY IN ACTION.
DON'T MIND US, FELLAS. VISITIN' V.I.P.'S.
WHY, THAT'S WENDELL DOWN THERE!
TALK ABOUT PERFECT TIMIN', HUH?
HALT!

SHADOWMASTERS™

風

WIND: AN ATTITUDE OF RECEIVING AND OF BENEVOLENCE AND WISDOM.

地

EARTH: THE SPIRIT OF BEING SOLID AND UNMOVING.

火

FIRE: AGGRESSIVENESS AND CONTROL.

水

WATER: CHANGE AND DEFENSIVENESS.

空

VOID: THE EMPTINESS AND CREATIVITY FROM WHICH THE OTHER ELEMENTS FLOW.

ALL PHYSICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF LIFE CAN BE APPROACHED FROM THESE FIVE DIRECTIONS.

Who are the **Shadowmasters**? Well, if you've been following THE PUNISHER WAR JOURNAL, you've seen them many times without realizing it. They're the deli operators in the **Punisher**'s apartment building. Does this mean the four-issue SHADOWMASTERS Graphic Novel Limited Series is a big city tale about people slicing baloney and making sandwiches? Not on your life.

Writer **Carl Potts** and penciler **Dan Lawless** have collaborated to produce a gripping origin of the Shadowmasters—people who will have a major role in the future of the Punisher. It is an origin set during the chaotic reconstruction of post-World War II Japan. In their tightly woven, intrigue-laden tale, all the exotic fascination and danger of the Orient becomes frighteningly alive.

Japan has been totally defeated. The United States armed forces, under the leadership of military governor **General Douglas MacArthur**, are purging the nation of its militaristic traditions as it helps it rebuild. But there are renegades who refuse to accept the new, uncertain, Occidental-dominated future. They seek a return of an Imperial Japan ruled once again by a divine emperor. These renegades see themselves as the only true—perhaps last—patriots of Japan. And anyone who does not totally support their cause is viewed as a traitor.

The most feared renegade leader is **Kantaro Major**. His atrocities have created a reign of terror in Iga Province that the American government realizes must be stopped and stopped fast. **Captain James Richards** is sent to the province with orders and men to do just exactly that. The mission is simple, expediting it isn't. And complicating things further is the

friendship he begins to develop with one of the province's town mayors, **Shigeru Ezaki**. Unknown to Captain Richards, Shigeru is one of the last practicing true ninjas. Because the Americans have outlawed all martial arts practices, Ezaki has been forced to defend his town from renegade raids in secret. Why does this man, whom you might normally expect to be on the side of the renegades, fight them? That is one of the many compelling plot twists in the tale. It is enough to say that Shigeru is fighting the renegades and though his personal war must be waged in secret, he's been able to keep the renegades out of his town.

Then comes Captain Richards. And shortly thereafter, Shigeru's secret is compromised. Kantaro Major has ordered that the American captain be killed. But the plan is foiled by Shigeru, but in rescuing the captain, Shigeru's secret is revealed. The American law is clear and immutable, Captain Richards must arrest the man who saved his life. Yet, he cannot. Instead, the man from the West reaches an agreement of honor with the man from the East. If Shigeru helps Captain Richards against the rebels, no arrest will be made. And as their war against the renegades progresses, the two form a bond of increasing respect and friendship that can only be broken by death.

As the Limited Series reveals, the two men become so successful, the rebel activity is effectively eliminated. Yet for all their success, they are haunted by a great failure. They have not been able to capture Kantaro Major. And worse, Kantaro Major has made a blood vow of vengeance. He will never rest until he has killed Captain Richards, Shigeru Ezaki, and their families.

Richards and Ezaki are forced to make a fateful decision. The only way they can protect their children from the vengeance of Kantaro Major is to turn them into living weapons. Shigeru Ezaki knows how it can be done, and knows the frightful price that the souls of their children will have to pay. But if they are to survive, and they must survive, they must become Shadowmasters.

And at the end of the Limited Series you will see what it means to be a Shadowmaster, and understand more than anyone else the role the children of Captain Richards and Shigeru Ezaki now come to play in the life of the Punisher.

—Barry Dutter

THE MARVEL AGE OF COMICS: 1979 PART III

What did **Conan**, **Howard the Duck**, **Dracula**, and the **Hulk** have in common back in 1979? Well, it's true they all have a weakness for shapely redheads, but the answer we have in mind is—they all had their adventures published not only in the four-color format, but also in Marvel magazines as well!

Conan had been enjoying this rare privilege the longest—the SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN magazine was in its fifth year of publication, still presenting feature-length adaptations of **Robert E. Howard** classics, with back-up articles on the history of the Hyborian Age, features on the coming Conan films, and occasional added tales of **Solomon Kane**, **Kull**, and RED SONJA—who, in her own comic, explored the River of the Dead, the mysteries of Skranos, and the Tomb of the Three Dead Kings before confronting the ultimate foe—cancellation.

Meanwhile, in CONAN THE BARBARIAN, **Roy Thomas** and **John Buscema** were presenting some of the most important episodes in the entire Conan canon! **Ajaga**, the Beast-King of Abombi, kidnaped Conan's pirate bride, **Belit**—and with his black lion at his side, Conan battled through monsters and nameless perils to save her. Alas, it was all for naught—for in the hundredth issue, an adaptation of Howard's "Death on the Black Coast," Belit died in battle, and the Cimmerian burned her ship, the *Tigress*, to serve as her pyre. Alone, mourning, bereft of

Conan is TM and © 1989 by Conan Properties, Inc.

the truest love he had known, Conan wandered into action against spider-things and jungle vampires, becoming war-chief of the Bamulas. Adaptations of "The Vale of Lost Women" and the **L. Sprague deCamp/Lin Carter** opus, "Castle of Terror," rounded out the year, while the CONAN ANNUAL looked into the future at the wedding night of King Conan and **Queen Zenobia**.

HOWARD THE DUCK came to a close as a monthly Marvel Comic, with **Howard** donning the **Iron Duck** armor (made for him by **Claude Stark**) and rescuing his beloved **Beverly** from the machinations of **Doctor Bong**. But Howard would not be long gone from the newsstands — his magazine debuted shortly before year's end, presenting double-length fowl tales in a striking new format! Under editor **Rick Marschall**, the Marvel magazines now had a new sleek style and polish. Howard took on both old and new threats, including cosmic accountant **Pro-Rata**, **Mr. Chicken**, **Jackpot the One-Armed Bandit**, and the amazing **Chair-Thing**!

Similarly, TOMB OF DRACULA ended its run as one of comics' most successful horror series, only to return in magazine format. The last three issues of the four-color series concluded the suspenseful **Marv Wolfman/Gene Colan** serial, as a human **Dracula**, literally exiled by both heaven and hell, regained his leadership of the vampires, only to meet death when his age-old nemesis exploded Castle Dracula, sacrificing himself to end the menace of the Transylvanian count forever. In the wake of their deaths, peace was made between Dracula's bride and son, **Domini** and **Janus**, and the remaining vampire hunters, **Rachel Van Helsing** and **Frank Drake**.

Within months it was revealed that Quincy's sacrifice had been in vain. The TOMB OF DRACULA magazine recounted Drac's survival, and led him on strange odysseys against foes such as the **Dimensional Man**, while back-up articles previewed the upcoming **Frank Langella** Dracula film, and explored other vampiric lore.

In THE HULK!, ol' Green-skin's full process color adventures pitted him against skyjacking terrorists, berserk **Cybortrons**, and everglades mysteries. In keeping with the Hulk's current television show, his magazine exploits tended to be reality-based, rarely incorporating the more fantastic elements of the Marvel Universe. In the back of THE HULK!, discovering stardom in the hands of **Doug Moench** and **Bill Sienkiewicz**, was the mysterious **Moon Knight**! His enemies here included the merciless **Lupinar** and a hatchet murderer who was revealed to be his own brother, **Rand Spector**!

Over in THE INCREDIBLE HULK comic book, the ploys of the **Corporation** involved the Hulk in a crossover with CAPTAIN AMERICA, as Corporation head **Kligger** and the savage **Animus** both met horrible fates. Tracking down **Curtiss Jackson**, the remaining head of the Corporation, the Hulk met **Marvel Man**, who decided from the derisive laughter his name inspired to change his epithet to **Quasar**! But while the Hulk's friend, **Fred Sloan**, tried to get him to kick back and relax, Jackson manipulated the Hulk into an epic three-issue slugfest against **Machine Man**! Finally, for those who wondered about the "They" who masterminded plenty of bizarre plots in old MARVEL TEAM-UP tales, all was revealed in a multi-part serial which brought the Hulk, **Tyrannus**, and the **Goldbug** to the lost city of El Dorado! An encounter with the new Canadian hero, **Sasquatch**, made the HULK ANNUAL not to be missed.

Magazine full process color was also to be found in MARVEL COMICS SUPER SPECIAL, which presented a new exploit of **Star-Lord** and an adaptation of the film "Meteor." Most prestigious in the year, though, was the three-issue spectacle of WEIRDWORLD, starring **Tyndall**, **Velanna**, and **Mudbutt** in "Warriors of the Shadow Realm!"

Star-Lord also headlined the fantasy magazine, MARVEL PREVIEW, which hosted as well an all-new **Blackmark** story, "The Mind Demons," and tales of **Kull the Conqueror** (battling **Thulsa Doom**) and **Solomon Kane** (against African mysticism).

CRAZY completed the Marvel magazine gallery, steadily running its diet of parody and satire until early 1983. This month's Price Guide lists the entire run of CRAZY so you don't figure we've left it out of our yearly chronicles.

But say — we covered the Hulk this month, but what were the rest of Marvel's solo superstars doing in 1979? Join us next month as **Spider-Man** first meets the **Black Cat**, **Tony Stark** kicks the bottle, and **Frank Miller** takes his pencil to DAREDEVIL!

— Brian Nelson

MARVEL® COMICS PRICE GUIDE

We at Marvel believe in the informed consumer. Sure, the line has to be drawn some place so that we can get on with the business of comics — and so, sadly, we have no time to road test the X-ray specs, black soap, sea monkeys, or other products that may be advertised in comics. But we won't ignore our commitment to you, the consumer! It's out of that commitment — plus force of habit, actually — that we present this price guide, telling you what you can expect to pay for these back issues at your local comics specialty shop. Our source as always is **Robert Overstreet**'s THE COMIC BOOK PRICE GUIDE #18. But remember: this is only a guide. Actual prices may vary, and should be lower for copies in fair or poor condition.

	CONDITION		
	Good	Fine	Mint
■ **CONAN THE BARBARIAN**			
94-99		.50	1.00
100	.40	1.25	2.50
(death of **Belit**)	.40	1.25	2.50
101-105		.35	.70
ANNUAL 5	.25	.70	1.40
■ **CRAZY** (magazine)			
1	.35	1.00	2.00
2		.60	1.20
3-16		.40	.80
17-81, 83-94		.30	.60
82 (**X-Men** on cover)	.30	.60	1.20
■ **HOWARD THE DUCK** (magazine)			
1		.50	1.00
2		.30	.60
■ **THE HULK!** (magazine)			
13-18 (**Moon Knight** back-up)		.60	1.20
■ **THE INCREDIBLE HULK**			
231-240		.60	1.20
241-242		.40	.80
ANNUAL 8		.50	1.00
■ **MARVEL COMICS SUPER SPECIAL** (magazine)			
10 (**Star-Lord**)	.35	1.00	2.00
11-13 (25-copy run with gold seal, signed by artists)	10.00	30.0	60.00
11 (**Weirdworld**)	.70	2.00	4.00
12 (**Weirdworld**)	.40	1.25	2.50
13 (**Weirdworld**)	.30	.90	1.80
14 (**Meteor**)		.60	1.20
■ **MARVEL PREVIEW** (magazine)			
17-19		.50	1.00
■ **RED SONJA**			
13-15		.30	.60
■ **SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN** (magazine)			
37-48	.35	1.00	2.00
■ **TOMB OF DRACULA**			
68-70		.35	.70
■ **TOMB OF DRACULA** (magazine)			
1		.60	1.20
2 (Ditko art)	.35	1.00	2.00

Which came first the MUTANT or the egg?

Send your letters to: MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE, c/o Marvel Entertainment Group, Inc., 387 Park Ave. South, New York, NY 10016

Attention correspondents: All letters to be considered for publication must include your name and address though we will withhold that info on request!

This month's letter column title brings us a deeply philosóphical puzzle straight from the deeply philosophical mind of Andy Neumeyer of glamorous North Hollywood, CA. Thanks, Andy. But tell us—what if it's a mutant egg? (Well, it'll join Excalibur, of course, but we mean besides that.)

And while everyone's pondering that little conundrum, here's something else to consider. As you know, we need a new, different, and stone-fresh title every single month. So settle in to those Tibetan retreats and start thinking! If we use one of your suggestions, we'll even print your name in this space to say "thanks." Sure beats having your name put up in the post office, doesn't it?

Dear MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE,

I've kicked around the idea of writing this letter to you for a while. Why not make a Marvel newspaper? MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE already features things like previews of upcoming issues and up-to-date information about what's going on in Marvel, but what about the people who can't get MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE? They could buy a newspaper about Marvel and get the same info that the MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE readers get. I know I wished a newspaper about Marvel would be made before a comics shop was built around here, because not many places sell MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE.

Not only could you put news in the newspaper but you could put strips in it like a regular newspaper does.

Well, until **Captain America** kisses Gorbachev, Make Mine Marvel!

Robert Baumgartner
P.O. Box 2015
New Port Richey, FL 34656

Sounds like an interesting idea, Robert. And while we don't have any plans for a newspaper, we do have the Marvel Universe Year in Review! It's a special section in this year's MARVEL AGE ANNUAL #5 that features journalistic articles on the highlights of 1988! Don't miss it! Y'know, another thing you might not want to miss is getting home delivery of the monthly news-magazine you're holding in your hands. Think of it: if you subscribe, you could check out all the upcoming projects in the comfort of your home. You'd know what was going to appear before you visited your favorite comics shop. It's a power even Galactus would envy.

Say, looks like the Yellow Fairy has left us yet another sporty yellow background, and just in time for our LETTER OF THE MONTH too! You know how our Letter of the Month works, right? How we sift through our mountains of mail each month to come up with a letter (or sometimes even two) that we think will be of even more interest than usual to the rampaging hordes of Marveldom? And how we print that lucky letter right here? Yeah, of course you do. No point in our explaining it all again.

You've probably heard (or even engaged in) debates about realism in comics. Well, this issue's Letter of the Month looks at that issue from a unique perspective: How realistically do Marvel heroes dress?

To the offices of MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE,

One of the longest-running traditions in heroic fantasy is the concept of the costume. Since the time of the legends of the Black Knight to today's Spider-Man, the costume has added a sense of mystery and wonder to the appearance of "ordinary" mortals.

Lately, however, this concept has become more and more unrealistic. In an age when most readers demand absolute authenticity, perhaps the time has come to reconsider many aspects of this tradition. In other words, the time has come for costuming that augments the wearer's needs and abilities rather than his fashion sense.

One of the worst problems in the costuming of today's heroes is the coloring. For example, let us look at one of Marvel's most popular characters, the Punisher. We have been shown time and time again that Frank Castle is a hunter in the night; yet how can this be when Castle wears a huge white skull on his chest? Not only would this prevent him from camouflaging himself, but it would also provide a perfect target for any well-trained sniper.

Another of Marvel's top characters also suffers from this problem. Wolverine is continually portrayed as an expert in the art of combat. Are we honestly expected to believe that such a person would wear bright, gaudy colors like

orange and red?

Accessories are yet another aspect of costuming that has detracted from the realism of costuming. Wolverine's mask, for example, would utterly rob him of his peripheral vision, and the spikes on his knees and head would do nothing to complement his abilities.

But sometimes, the costume itself is the problem. Mockingbird's uniform, for instance, would never be worn by a highly trained secret agent. They would know that loose sleeves can only trip up someone in combat. What is worse, Mockingbird also wears her hair loose, a definite error. If she were fighting in a strong wind, her hair could whip back into her face, blinding her.

But the worst error in costuming, and one that is currently running rampant and unchecked in comics, is the cape. Capes, while dramatic, serve only to trip up the hero and are unnecessary. In a strong wind, a flying character's cape would slip over his head and blind him. In a close fight, an opponent could use the cape to his advantage to throw the hero off balance.

For some characters, disguise is necessary. If Peter Parker had revealed his secret identity to the world, May Parker would never have survived as long as she has, and Peter would have been hounded to the ends of the Earth. But for other heroes, like Frank Castle, Marc Spector, and Logan, costuming is not needed.

The solution? Characters who operate at night should, naturally, wear black or grey. Castle should probably also wear some sort of black facial paint to aid him in camouflaging himself. Marc Spector should replace the white uniform he currently wears with grey. Since he wears a hood, his mask could easily be done away with and replaced with grey facial paints.

Heroes who operate in daylight should wear tight-fitting outfits that are free of capes, hats, scarves and helmets. While such outfits are fine for the Asgardian gods, the idea of a human being functioning in them stretches realism.

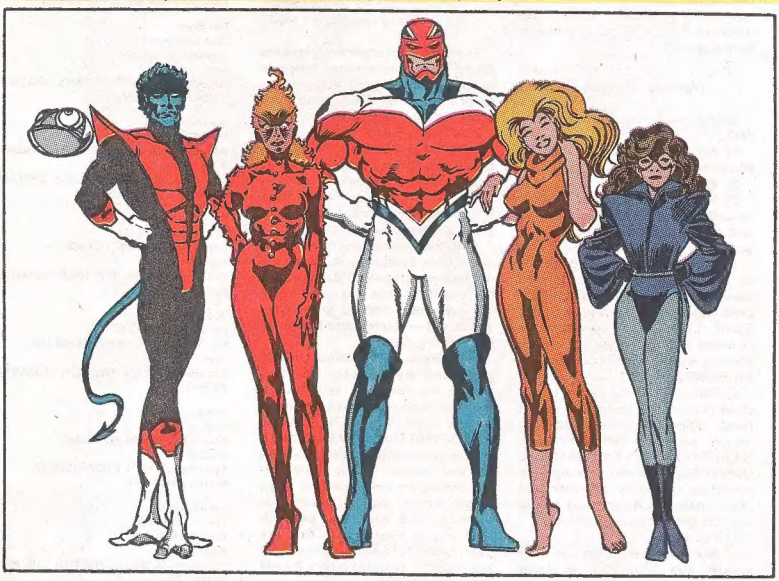
Hopefully, the ideas I have presented here, if published, will generate responses from other readers. I also hope that you, the creators behind the heroes who have been part of my life for many years, will consider my suggestions.

Den Elms
(Address withheld by request)

Thanks for an articulate and well thought-out letter, Den. You've raised some good points, although we do think you've overlooked a couple of things. First of all, quite a few Marvel heroes' costumes *do* serve practical purposes by carrying equipment and/or weapons; Iron Man's armor seems to be an obvious example, as are Ant Man's helmet and belt or even Cyclops's visor. (And incidentally, if you're interested in functional costumes, you might want to check out the DREAMWALKER Graphic Novel; every piece of the Dreamwalker's costume was designed to serve a practical purpose, right down to the lead bludgeons sewn into his cape.)

But keep in mind that some costumes are designed as much to carry a psychological impact as to serve a functional purpose or two. That's why, even though the Punisher's taken to wearing clothing that looks less like a skin-tight costume than something you might see on the street, he still keeps that big white skull on his chest. And to tell you the truth, when we gave Wolverine a new look in the pages of his own series, it seemed like half the known galaxy wrote in to demand that we put him back in the X-Men costume they knew and loved!

In the long run, we guess that it comes down to everyone having different tastes. So let's find out: What do the rest of you think about Den's ideas? Write in and let us know!



ANSWERS TO MARVEL® TRIVIA QUIZ

1. A	4. B	7. B	10. C
2. A	5. B	8. A	11. C
3. A	6. C	9. B	12. C

Marvel Aged People,

I know that my letter is probably not in the Letter of the Month yellow, but could you please highlight it with, say, oh maybe hot pink? The reason why I want my letter highlighted (well, printed, first of all) is that I'm sure all other Marvel fans would like to know the answers to these questions:

1) Does Wolverine shave his face with his claws?

2) Does Colossus shower with Turtle Wax?

3) Is the Kingpin really all solid muscle?

4) Does Fred Hembeck really like Brother Voodoo? If so, maybe Marvel should let Fred do a limited series.

5) Does Iron Man ever have to oil his armor?

6) Would Wonder Man ever do a bread commercial?

7) Does Cyclops's bedroom ceiling need repairs?

8) Is Irving Forbush's helmet microwave-safe? And is he going to have a limited series?

W.G. Meakin
(Address withheld by request)

Taking your questions in order, W.G.:

1) No, but he does use them to shave his legs.

2) Why? Do you?

3) Yup, 450 pounds of it. Well, actually, there's also some bones and blood and stuff in there, but you know what we mean.

4) Sure does! And while there's no BROTHER VOODOO Limited Series coming up in the near future, Fred has teamed up with scripter Scott Lobdell, to produce a Brother Voodoo story for an upcoming issue of MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS.

5) Not really, because his armor doesn't have any joints that would need oiling. According to our handy copy of THE OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE, ol' Shellhead's armor is made up of highly sophisticated chain mail that moves and bends with the help of a magnetic field.

6) For a price.

7) Not that we know of. You should see how fast he goes through kaleidoscopes, though.

8) Sorry, no plans for a limited series for the Way-Out Wonder just yet. But it's just a matter of time before the rest of the world catches on and demands one.

Dear MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE,

This is the first time I've written a letter to Marvel, so hang with me. I'm writing in reply to Stan's Soapbox in issue #74. He offered a deluxe No-Prize for all who know the origin of the expression "grapevine." Well, I know how the word originated.

The term "grapevine" dates back to the Civil War years in the United States. At the time, secret messages were sent over a telegraph line. The line was strung through trees and bushes almost like a vine. Today, the term "grapevine" includes all forms of unofficial communication. So do I get a No-Prize?

By the way, I loved the preview of MOON KNIGHT and I'm going to collect that regularly. Will you do more previews in MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE?

I've also got one more question: I collect about thirty dollars worth of comics each month; does that make me a Marvel Zombie?

So until Ms. Marvel becomes the new Iron Man, Make Mine Marvel!

Chris Haralson
227 1/2 Lenox Avenue
Elmira Heights, NY 14903

Thanks for the etymology lesson, Chris! A shiny, new Nobel No-Prize is on the way. Where'd you pick up all of this handy information, anyway—on the grapevine?

Also we're glad you liked the MOON KNIGHT preview. What'd you think about our preview of QUASAR in this issue? We've been trying out the preview format for a few months now, and we'd love to get some feedback.

And finally, don't worry so much about your Zombiehood, Chris! It's not how many Marvel titles you buy, it's whether or not you enjoy them. So if you're having a good time, watch out—you're already one of the walking dead!

Well, we're at the bottom of this page and we've gotta run. But before we dash off, let's take a moment to pause, reflect, and meet another batch of MARVEL CORRESPONDENTS! That's right, it's those happy-go-lucky guys and gals from the four corners of the globe who are looking for new friends to swap notes, letters, and the occasional greeting card with, just because they care enough to send the very best. All set? Then step right up and say "howdy" to this month's Marvel Correspondents!

MARVEL® CORRESPONDENTS

If you want to be listed in this section, simply send your name, address, age, and the title of your three favorite Marvel comics to Marvel Correspondents, c/o MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE, at the address high atop this column.

Jared Wright
2615 W. Tonilee Street
W. Jordan, UT 84088
Age: 13
Favorites: X-MEN, X-FACTOR, PUNISHER

Kevin Hickman
3340 Newton Tomlinson Road
Warren, OH 44481
Age: 16
Favorites: WEST COAST AVENGERS, X-FACTOR, SILVER SURFER

Edward Stash
3021 New Memory Lane
Liberty Boro, PA 15133
Age: 16
Favorites: AVENGERS, WEST COAST AVENGERS, MARVEL FANFARE

Billy C. Stagner
P.O. Box 75293
Oklahoma City, OK 73122
Age: 16
Favorites: AMAZING SPIDER-MAN, THE NEW MUTANTS, PUNISHER

Tim Frye
2153 Harpoon Drive
Stafford, VA 22554
Age: 15
Favorites: THE NEW MUTANT, AMAZING SPIDER-MAN, X-MEN

Warren Yerema
116-777 Leila Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba R2V-3R6 CANADA
Age: 17
Favorites: G.I. JOE, G.I. JOE SPECIAL MISSIONS, ALIEN LEGION

Craig Fraser
23 Riversdale Road
Upper Hutt, NEW ZEALAND
Age: 19
Favorites: X-MEN, THE NEW MUTANTS, MARSHAL LAW

Joel Morton
RR #2 Site 232 C-15
Port Alberni, BC V9Y 7L3 CANADA
Age: 13
Favorites: X-MEN, THE NEW MUTANTS, AVENGERS

Juan C. Rivera
Villamil 159
San Turce, Puerto Rico 00907
Age: 11
Favorites: X-MEN, PUNISHER, All Spider-Man Titles

Steve Johnson
1718 Judy Lane
DeKalb, IL 60115
Age: 14
Favorites: X-MEN, X-FACTOR, THE NEW MUTANTS

Fantastic Four

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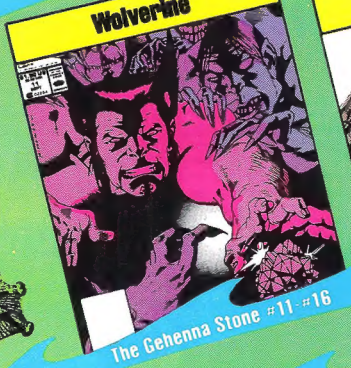

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